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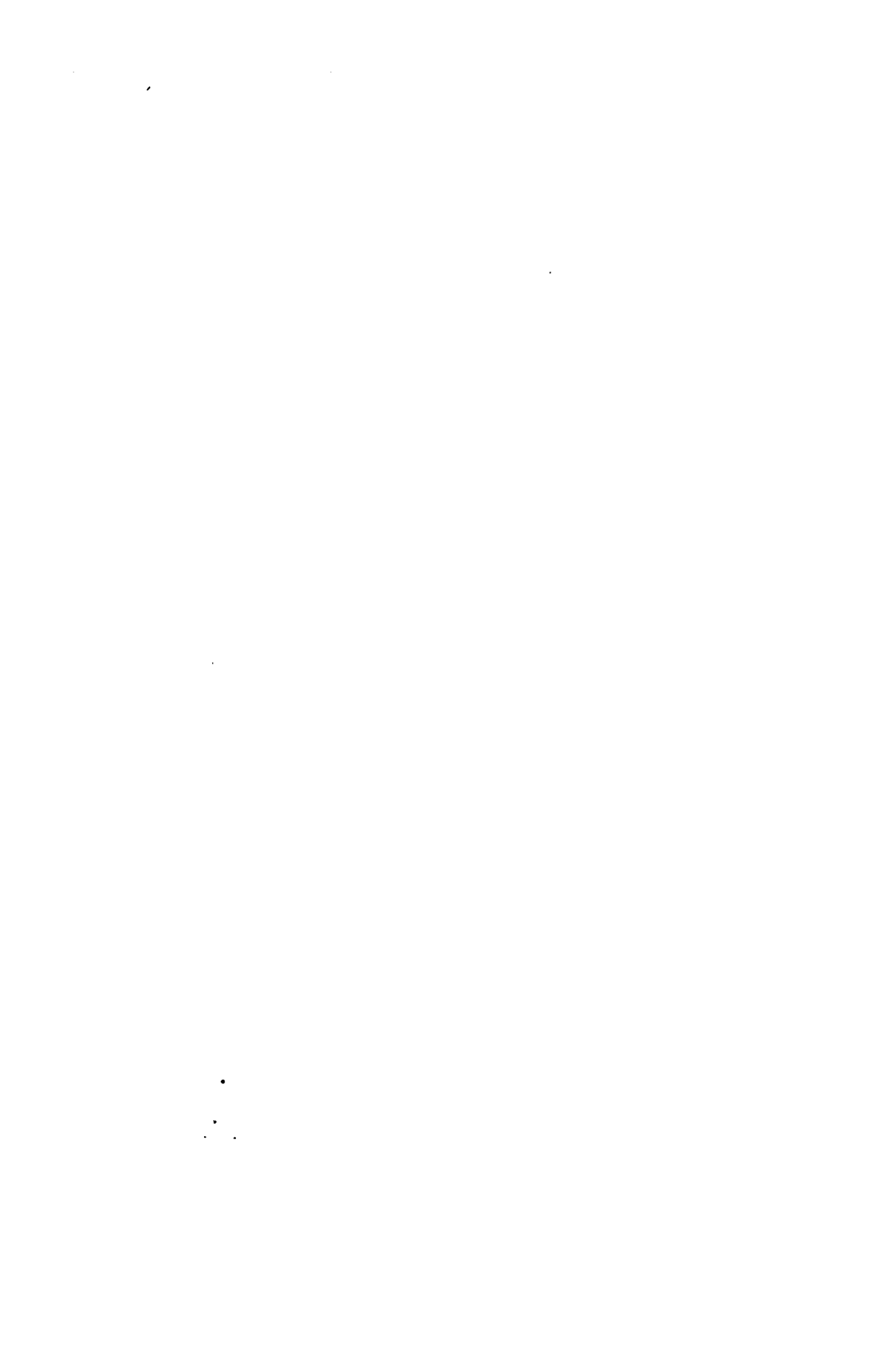
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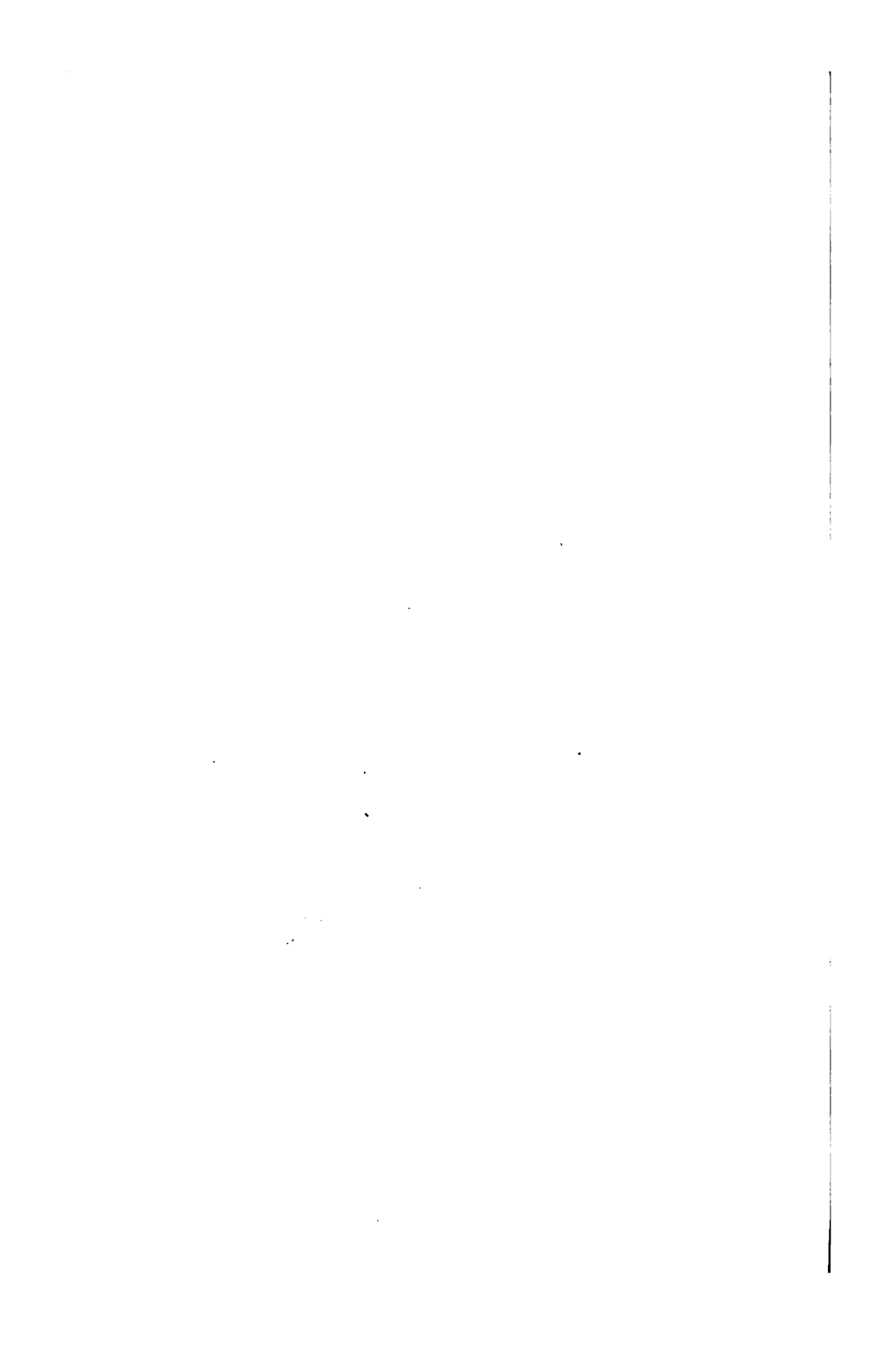




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A

TREATISE  
ON  
VERSIFICATION.

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BY THE  
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## PREFACE.

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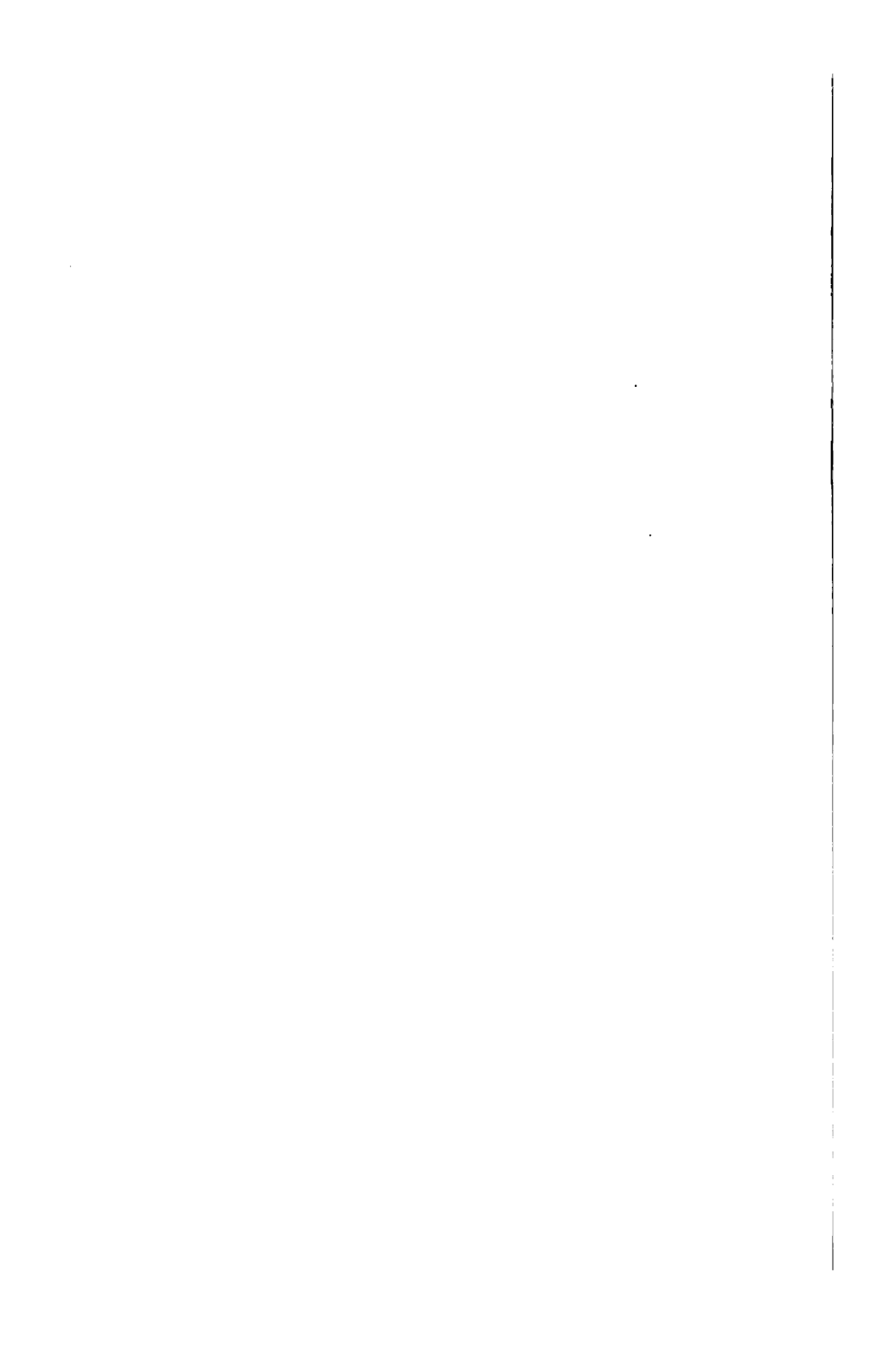
THE following Treatise has long lain by the Author, in hopes that its subject might be taken up by some other hand, more able to discuss the general principles which should give a common basis to ancient and modern Versification, and thus introduce some breadth of view and interest into a subject which seems to have been considered with partial glimpses, and made more dry and dull than any other. The confusion hence arising is exceedingly great, as may be seen in the attempts to introduce the ancient metres into our modern tongues, which have no prosody of quantity.



No such work having appeared, as far as the Author's knowledge extends, he has been induced to put the Treatise in order for publication.

He is moved also by the consideration of the very essential use which a knowledge of the principles of versification, involving as they do the elements of recitation, is to correct and good reading; both as to the clear and firm enunciation of the syllables, and the management of the pauses. Without these no flexibility can be obtained, but all will be an indistinct monotonous drawl, varied perhaps by unmeaning starts. It has been remarked that poets always write good prose. The reason is obvious. And not less obvious is the reason why good readers of poetry are always good readers of prose: nor can there be a good reader of prose, fully equal to every occasion, who has not first made himself a good reader of poetry. His recitation will not have been surely founded on the principles of the language, and must, therefore, be uncertain at best. Unfortunately good reading is quite as scarce as every

other good thing. And, therefore, it seems no unprofitable work to promote it, especially when it is considered on what serious occasions it comes into exercise, and what a grievous hindrance bad reading then is.



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## TREATISE ON VERSIFICATION.

## CHAPTER I.

## ON THE NATURE OF VERSE IN GENERAL.

1. THE word *Verse* has been derived from the Latin tongue, in which it means in general a *turning*, and, in particular, the turning of the ox and plough at the end of the furrow. Thence, by an obvious figure, it was applied to a written line, whether in prose or verse; for in the primitive fashion of writing, the letters of the consecutive line *turned* in a direction opposite to that of the preceding, as does the horse or ox in the consecutive furrow. But apart from this particular custom, a stone or parchment crossed with lines could not but put the farmers, as all then were, very forcibly in mind of a field crossed with furrows,

and lead them to the figurative language. Thus we are referred, by this meaning of the word, not to any *quality* of the language employed, but simply to the *quantity* of space occupied on the leaf, stone, or tablet. And since poetry was the main subject of transcription in the interval between the periods of sculptured monuments and familiar prose writing, the term Verse came to be appropriated to its measured line, and in this sense only has entered ours and every other modern language.

2. Here then we find the first article of its definition, which is, that it is of an assigned extent. But further, this assigned extent, on being repeated, leads us to demand a similarity of structure; and the marks of this similarity must of course be expressed by the recitation, through which alone, originally, verse was conveyed to the mind, and to which, at all times, even while read only by the eye, it is referred by the mind, and so regarded by it exclusively according to the effects on the ear. But these are constant and essential only as to the individual words: they are variable as to sentences. Now the recitation of words involves but three things: (1) A certain length of time given to the pronunciation of each syllable. (2) The pronunciation of each syllable in a certain key. (3) The pronunciation of it in a certain loudness of tone. The similarity of structure, there-

fore, must be found in the repetition of some one of these, and to these three elements, therefore, and no where else, we must look for the constant basis of versification, which, accordingly, may be defined as—

A series of words, which is of definite extent, and follows an arrangement which depends on the regulated recurrence of a syllable which is peculiarly marked according to some one of the fore-mentioned elements.

The extent is determined by the number of intervals and returns thus formed, for example in the verses,—

Múrmuring, síghing, and sórrrowing,  
To the woóds, to the móúntains, and stráams.

The syllables follow according to the arrangement of the return of the stress at the interval of every two ; and the verses are equal in length, each consisting of three returns and three intervals, only in a reverse order in either line

Thus verse is entirely independent of the inward and mental part of language, so that even utter nonsense may be conveyed in the most harmonious verse ; and, depending on the invariable properties of the voice alone, it has nothing really to do with alliteration or rhyme, or any of the variable accidents of mere articulation, though



these may be taken additionally into the account for the sake of ornament. And it is from the number of the returns, and from the measure of the intervals, and from the proportions thus presented, that the terms *numbers, measure, rhythm, time, harmony*, and the like, here become applicable to verse. We will now proceed to discuss these elements of versification.

3. The first is the time taken up in the pronunciation of a syllable. Thus, if in any language its syllables were divisible into two or more classes, according to two or more invariable times of pronouncing them, then a return might be made by the syllables of one time recurring at the interval of syllables of another time, or even of two other times, as thus, *AaAaAa, &c.*, or even *AaaAaaAaa, &c.* The latter, however, of these schemes is too artificial for any known language. It would not indeed be too complex for the eye, which can comprehend a whole in one glance, and dwell long enough upon it for comparison of parts, as in the survey of specimens of embroidery and architecture; but it would scarcely be appreciated by the ear, which can bring but a portion present before the mind at a time, the preceding part existing but in memory, and the succeeding anticipated in thought from it. The only languages, therefore, that have employed this basis for verse, which

are the Greek and Latin, have been content with acknowledging but two times, and those in the simplest proportion of one to two, so that in the word *musa*, the pronunciation of the first syllable shall take up twice as much time as does that of the second. Our word *muses* exemplifies a similar difference of times. The former of these is called the long time, the latter the short time. The return is naturally denoted by the former, as by the more important, the interval by the latter; and a verse will be formed thus:—

*Mūsa quē meās ad āures,*

*Muses āll divine and hōly,*

where the return is double of the interval. Or thus,

*Experiēntia pārcis,*

where the return and interval are equal. Such a basis has proved quite sufficient in the supply of variety for every possible use of verse, and indeed far more sufficient than the two put together that remain for mention. Hence the word quantity has been applied to syllables, as denoting the quantity of time which their pronunciation occupies.

4. The second is the key of voice in which a syllable is pronounced. Thus, if any language had

its syllables divisible into two or more classes, according to the respective keys, higher or lower, in which by invariable usage they were pronounced, here again were a basis for versification. Suppose a certain number were pronounced in the note F, another in A, another in C, then syllables would admit of the arrangement, FACFAC, &c., together with the varieties arising from the permutations of the combination FAC. And there would be just the same resources for return and interval as before; but here again, also, even the most musical of languages, the Greek and Latin, do not recognize more than two classes; the one, of syllables pronounced in a lower tone, called the grave, the other, of syllables pronounced in a higher tone, called the acute; the latter but on one syllable of the word, the former occupying all the remainder, as in *calámitas*; and the harmony resulting, and the flexibility of the instrument are very inferior to what is experienced in the former case; for although no return can be better marked than that which is afforded by the syllable on which the acute falls, yet the means of supplying the interval are very imperfect, since this must now be regulated by the *number* of syllables on which the grave falls, there being no other measure of them, and not by the intervening *time*, which may occupy the place of one or more syllables.

For example, in *ámñibus* and *ámñes* the interval is the same in time but different in number, and in *ámñes* and *ámñis* different in time but the same in number. Hence this basis is much inferior to the former, inasmuch as, through its limitation of the number of syllables in the interval, it excludes all that expansion and contraction which gives such expression according to the former basis, allowing the hexameter to roll on through seventeen syllables, or stop at thirteen. Besides, the interval is subjected to a foreign influence; namely, the *number*, as well as the *gravity*, of the syllables, and thus the simplicity and symmetry of the former basis does not exist.

But there is also an insuperable difficulty attending the construction of verse upon it, and which is the greater in proportion to the polysyllabic genius of the language. According to the former basis, we may have more than one return in a word, as in *cāñdídōs*, and more than one interval, as in *sñlebñt*; and thus we have little difficulty in finding words to follow each other according to any required metrical arrangement. But here one syllable only in a word can make the return, as in *animadversiónes*, while an unmanageable number may form the interval on one or both sides of it, as in this very word, which cannot enter any ordinary system according to the strict definition of

verse before given, if the interval be always the same; and that, except in the lyrical measures, it must be. In a language, therefore, which abounds in such words as calamitátibus, meditatiónes, how can we form the most common system of verse, that of alternate syllables of return and interval like our heroic measure? In short, the thing were impossible (as a whole), even in a language as abundant in short words as our own. Let any one try to make several trochaic, iambic, or even dactylic lines (according to accent) on this basis in Latin or Greek, and he will quickly find himself at a loss. For example,

Ille mágnos pér terróres.

Simplest as this metre is of all, yet it excludes all words of more than three syllables, and even of these all that have not the accent on the middle. Such words as térritos, ἀγαῶν, which impose an interval of two syllables, could not enter. Such a line as,

Inaccéssas regiónes,

depends on quite another principle, to which we now come.

5. The third, which is the stress laid upon a syllable. If there were in a language two classes of syllables, according to one of which they were pronounced in a louder tone, and according to the

other in a softer, here would still be a resource for return and interval, but with much less music than the last affords, and with the same insuperable difficulty, if a word admit the stress but on one syllable, which is laid down for the rule in every language. Yet this is the only basis of versification in every modern language. How it has been pressed into service we shall see presently.

6. We may observe in passing that the very imperfect base of similarity of sound has been applied to versification by some barbarous languages, as the Welsh and the Anglo-Saxon ; and therefore, as well as on account of its incidental aid to the true bases, we shall have to take it into consideration.

7. Such therefore are the only legitimate bases available for versification. Not that, however, it would be right to pass over altogether without notice another system also, which some have considered as a species of versification, though excluded by the adoption of the above definition, being based upon the mental part of the language, not on its pronunciation. It is that composition of language in which the return is made by a similarity of the syntactical construction of a sentence, which may run in the parallel or antithetical form, giving also the repetition of the idea according to similarity or contrariety. It has been termed rhythmical or measured prose,

and was the only vehicle of Hebrew poetry, if so, we may properly call it. For the sake of illustration, let us refer to the twenty-fourth Psalm, the whole of which runs in the following manner :

The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof :  
 The compass of the world, and the dwellers therein.  
 For he hath founded it upon the seas,  
 And prepared it upon the floods, &c.

8. Thus, we are furnished with the exact limits of verse and prose. However poetical in thought, and measured in sentences the latter may be, it cannot on that account make the slightest approach towards verse, unconstructed, as it is, on any regular return of the elements of speech. In fact, whenever such return becomes discernible, we are offended as with an impertinence, and the most musical sentence in prose will ever be the last to remind us of verse. We may, indeed, sometimes find an hexameter, more often a trimeter, in Greek or Latin prose ; but as being evidently such by mere accident, and according to mere scanning of syllables. For the marked pauses of verse are so wanting, that it requires some curiosity to find out that it has the feet of a complete verse. How many, if not told, would be aware that Tacitus began his *Annals* with an hexameter :—

*Urbem Romam a principio Reges habuere.*

And so again, however prosaic in thought and expression, a verse may still maintain its distinctive character, and be discerned from the prose, in which quotation may have imbedded it.

We will now proceed to examine these three bases in detail.



## CHAPTER II.

## ON QUANTITY.

9. THE clear pronounciation of every language of ordinary cultivation, requires each syllable to be uttered in a fixed time. That time may be the same for all syllables, as it is almost entirely, in the Hebrew, pronounced according to the Masoretic rule, and as is too much the case, for poetical capability, at least, in the French. But commonly it is longer for some, shorter for others. And so constant is this regulation, that any deviation from it is felt as a vicious barbarism. An Englishman, for example, is offended at hearing his language from the mouth of a Frenchman or Welshman, who seem to pronounce all syllables in the same long time, as in wātērr. The proportion of long to short, though reckoned in Greek and Latin in the definite ratio of two to one, cannot, however, be constant, on account of the difference made by the presence of consonants in the syllables. Thus the word Christ is sensibly longer

than the word cry ; and we find a progression of length in the words gray, grace, grac'd, and in graze, graz'd. The same thing was observed in the Greek, by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, who exemplified it in the words ὁδός, ῥόδον, τρόπος, στροφή. Still, however, the two classes are so distinct, that the number of words which may be ascribed indifferently to either, and are therefore termed common, is exceedingly small in any language. And, indeed, its existence at all is more often owing to poets taking advantage of an older pronunciation, than to any uncertainty about the quantity in their day. And therefore, in modern languages, since their versification depends not upon quantity, so that the revival of such old forms is uncalled for, and all left to the practice of the day, there is no such number, except in some few words, which having changed their accent, have happened thereby to change their quantity also. Such with us are words derived from the French, as barrier, which is used by Pope with the accent on the last ; and therefore with the last long instead of short ; and one or two more, in which the pronunciation of Chaucer's days may be allowed by poetical licence to linger still.

10. The Greek and Latin had a steady yet flexible pronunciation under their two set times ; and thus, they maintained a golden mean be-

tween those languages which for the most part employ but one time, and those which, like ours, have times of such various shortness, as even to have no assignable proportion to either a long syllable, or to one another; for what possible proportion can we discern between the times of pronouncing the first syllable of *nature*, and any of the three last of *admirable*. This defect is the consequence of the stress, and must affect all languages that employ it, as do all modern. For the nature of the stress is to lengthen the syllable, which is already long, as in *nature*, and to shorten the syllables which are already short as in *admirable*<sup>1</sup>; and thus, a wide gap is created between the longest and the shortest time, and not only all reduction to two times becomes impossible, but the several short times are distinguished more by the practice of a good ear than by any rules that can be found to regulate them.

So much has this uncertainty been felt, that some of our English grammarians have asserted, that in nineteen out of twenty of our words it is utterly indifferent whether we pronounce them long or short; and others have maintained that,

<sup>1</sup> It should be borne in mind that in our prosody, two consonants following a short vowel do not make the syllable long, because we slur the two into one. We do not say *ad-mirable*, distinctly pronouncing each consonant, and so gaining the time, as do the Welsh and French.

at least, the quantity of all our monosyllables is unsettled. Their mistake has arisen from viewing our language through the medium of the Greek and Latin ; and, therefore, limiting time to but one proportion ; and, still further, from the confusion which they make between stress and quantity. As it is so necessary to be clear upon this matter, before proceeding further, here follows a table, exhibiting at once the long and short vowels in our language, and according as the latter stand, when not made rapid by falling in the midst of unemphatic syllables, as are the *i* and *a* in admirable.

11. LONG.	SHORT.
1. <i>A</i> in pall, drawl.	<i>O</i> in poll, doll.
2. <i>A</i> . in father.	. . . . .
3. <i>A</i> in Matthew, grass.	<i>A</i> in mat, gas.
4. . . . .	{ <i>e</i> in her <i>i</i> in stir <i>o</i> in done, world <i>oo</i> in blood <i>u</i> in fun.
5. <i>a</i> in late	{ <i>e</i> in let, bet, regret, in- heritor <i>ea</i> in bread.
<i>ai</i> in baite	
<i>ea</i> in great	
<i>ei</i> in heir.	

**LONG.**

**SHORT.**

6. *e* in Bede  
*ee* in bleed  
*ea* in read  
*i* in machine.
7. *o* in pore  
*ou* in pour  
*oa* in roar  
*oo* in floor  
*o* in droll.
8. *oo* in rood, woo'd  
*u* in rude  
*ue* in blue  
*ew* in stew.
- { *oo* in wood  
*u* in full  
*ou* would.
9. Diphthongs, being all syllables that have *w* or *y*, followed by a simple vowel, as would, yard.
- And all syllables containing *u*, which is made up of Nos. 6 and 8, and also containing *i*, which is made up of Nos. 4 and 6, and all syllables containing *ou*

## LONG.

or *ow*, which is made up of Nos. 4 and 8, and containing *oi*, which is made up of Nos. 4 and 6.

*ew* is the only diphthong expressed adequately in letter, being the same with *u*.

10. Triphthongs, consisting of *w* followed by a diphthong, as in *wind*, *wound* (from *wind*), *way*.

12. Thus quantity is very distinctly marked in our language, and most especially that of our monosyllables, since there the stress least disturbs the time. And, what may seem strange, the number of long sounds exceeds that of short in the proportion of 7 : 6, putting out even the diphthongs and triphthongs. But then the recurrence of them is in a very different proportion, that of long being to that of short in the ratio of only 10 : 23, owing to so many being unemphatic (77). Thus it would be impossible to construct metre on the basis of quantity in our language.

The very simplest measure, that of alternate long and short, would be impracticable to any sufficient extent. For such a purpose the recurrences of long and short should be nearly equal, as we shall see presently to be the case in the Greek and Latin. But we need not repine at a lot which necessarily befalls every modern language, regulated and tuned as they are by stress: and the Italian, having much longer words than ours, must have a much greater deluge of unemphatic, and therefore short syllables of ill-proportioned time. Nothing can show more clearly the confusion which has prevailed between quantity and stress than the attempts which have been made to introduce the ancient metres into the modern tongues. So prejudiced are we with the stress, that we are in fact utterly indisposed to any attention to long and short, beyond such as is required for correctness of pronunciation, and are thus rendered quite insensible to that beauty which is the effect of metrical quantity; and so entirely do we read the ancient poetry according to stress, that we could not, without such long and painful practice as none has undertaken, recite a single verse according to quantity: and assuredly if we did, then we should astonish the ears of our listeners much more than gratify them.

## CHAPTER III.

## ON STRESS.

13. ACCENT, properly so called, does not exist as a recognized regulation of speech in any modern language ; however some, as the French and Welsh, possess it to a certain degree. But so much is the contrary the case in ours, that the variation between a higher and lower key in speaking is the mark of a rustic and provincial pronunciation. Since then the Greek and Latin made it no basis of versification, we have no need of noticing it any further, after having stated that in those languages, as the ear grew more unrefined and lost the measure of quantity, so did it lose also the notes of accent so intimately concerned in it. Thus the acute degenerated into a mere stress, according to which we pronounce the Latin <sup>1</sup>, and which also in

<sup>1</sup> We may here observe, that in Latin the acute falls on the penultimate of dissyllables, and of such words of more than two syllables as have the penultimate long. Where such words have it short, the accent falls on the antepenultimate. The accent on the last is little congenial with the language.



the Greek still retains its old places, to the great disturbance of the quantity, as in *οὐλομένην*, which they are obliged to pronounce with the penultimate long, and in *ἄνθρωπος* which they must pronounce as a dactyl. For the stress on a single vowel necessarily prolongs its time, and the vowel on which it does not fall must therefore be of a shorter time. While on the principle of accent *ἄν* might be pronounced in the note A, *θρῶπος* in the note F, without the true quantity being at all affected.

14. It is impossible for us to conceive the richness of the recitation of the old versification, rolling in varied measure of time to the music of its accents. The analogy between its basis and ours of stress has been well illustrated by the comparison of the flute, which holds notes a longer or shorter time, with the drum, which expresses but louder or softer sounds ; and indeed the reading of a passage of Tasso or Milton after one of Homer or Virgil, has very much the same effect as the drums which are beaten after the full band has paused. The confusion between things so different has arisen from our being compelled to read the ancient measures according to stress, and in some degree also from the carelessness of applying the word Accent to our modern Stress.

15. The stress is as necessary to give clearness

to speech, as the division into words is to convey it to writing. It distinguishes a word from its neighbour, and would do so most perfectly, and our speech might run without a pause between the words, as the Greek is written in old inscriptions without a break, if the stress fell uniformly on the first, or uniformly on the last syllable of the word ; to the first of which conditions there is a prevailing inclination in our language, as to the last in the French. But the monotony would be so intolerable, that we should pay dearly for superior precision, and the stress would be wholly inapplicable as an instrument of verse, since it would be impossible to secure the regular interval of a certain number of unaccented syllables, except at least through a short and painful extent. It falls, therefore, on either syllable of a dissyllable. But when we come to a trisyllable, and place it on the first, we find ourselves rather far back for marking off the whole word, and are inclined to repeat it, faintly indeed, on the last, as appears from our allowing such words as *liberty*, *intemperate*, to conclude such verses as necessarily end with an accented syllable. And here lies a great difference between accent and stress. In accent there can be set a decided limit to the height of the voice. In the Greek it rises through the interval of a third. But in stress there can be no certain

limit to loudness. Being thus undefinable, it admits of at least two degrees, and we can so modify one stress in comparison of another, that it may either equal it, or be something less, or almost vanish, as it does at the end of these trisyllables. Thus, in proportion as we feel the need of it, the fainter and secondary stress becomes more sensible ; as it does when we place the principal stress so far back as on the fourth syllable from the end, for instance, in the words *móderator*, *admínistratió*n. There we are obliged to make a very decided, if not so full a stress, on the next syllable but one after the place of the first stress : though indeed in many cases, as in the word *récollécti*on, it is difficult to say which is the primary and which the secondary stress. Hence in our language the stress is echoed through every alternate syllable of a word, and our recitation has a waving motion, which becomes very striking in the recitation of what are called iambic or trochaic metres. Thus far it is an admirable instrument of versification, and such measures are almost exclusively the vehicles of our poetry.

16. Now, also, we see how we are to be supplied with what are called the dactylic and anapæstic measures, which require the stress but once in the space of three syllables. Though we cannot represent these so perfectly as the last, yet we may

exhibit them decidedly enough for the purpose. We have only to keep our ear alive to the stronger stress, and let the weaker go for nothing. And as the stress on the last syllable of such words as "liberty" is very faint, and as in a word of such length as "moderation," we may choose which we will for the stronger, the difficulty is overcome. For example, the word "moderation" will suit the iambic structure, as in

To *móderation* gíve her *dúe*,

or the dactylic, as in

Gíve *moderátion* her *dúe*.

Again, the stress on the adjective may be weakened, compared with that of its following substantive, so that such a combination as "the black *déep*," shall answer to an anapæst, though here the adjective should have a short syllable, as will be seen if we substitute *wide* for *black*; the long syllable requiring a stress too strong to be sufficiently weakened. A similar arrangement may be made between the verb and its noun; and in general, since in the case of two stresses coming together in one foot, one can be made weaker than the other, we can sufficiently annul its force, in comparison with that of the other. Still the metre will be clumsy and hobbling whenever we come to

such an expedient, in proportion to the force of stress which we conventionally forego: and thus we see within what narrow bounds of harmony, stress, as compared with quantity, confines us. As a defective means of harmony, it has an analogy to the defective syntax of our modern tongues. They both compel us to exercise judgment and taste, and therefore to conventional usage, where the ancients had precluded such exercise by having already provided through it rigid rules of utterance, and definite forms of inflection. They could have known no such wide distinction between good and bad readers of poetry and prose as we are forced to admit, who must determine a dactyl from a cretic by the metre, and a nominative from an accusative from position or common sense.

17. There remains the consideration of the stress on monosyllables. It may at first sight seem necessary that the stress should fall on every monosyllable. But then we must bear in mind that there is in every language a class of words which contain no especial meaning in themselves, but only in relation to the neighbouring words, to which, therefore, we attach them with scarcely a sensible break in our pronunciation. Hence they can have no stress upon themselves, but add it instead to the stress of the word to which they

are joined, as in "he wént," "gíve me," "to tówn," &c. Such are conjunctions, as "and, but, if," &c. ; pronouns, as "I, me, who," &c. ; articles, adverbs, prepositions ; auxiliary verbs, as "shall, will, am," &c. All such monosyllables are without stress, except when emphatic in sense ; thus, "I will go" may be pronounced "I will g6," merely intimating the intention of going ; or "I' will g6," signifying that none else shall go ; or "I wíll g6," signifying a determination to go. When two or three such come together, then we must begin the stress with the most emphatic, and lay it on the rest so as not to leave more than two running without one, as in "Bút and íf he shall g6."

18. And here we see the remarkable advantage which our language possesses in having its auxiliary verbs under the monosyllabic form ; for when they are unemphatic they slide unto the verb, and practically make one word with it, so that "he will d6" is almost as compact as "faciat." Thus they do not clog our sentences any thing like so much (to the ear at least, though not to the eye) as they do in French and Italian, where they are mostly dissyllabic. And in the next place, when they are emphatic, they convey a force of expression which cannot be conveyed in Greek and Latin ; for those languages must either employ

the same form to represent "he shall gó," and "he sháll gó," or vary the phrase.

Nothing shows the scholarlike pronouncer of his own language more decidedly than the proper attention shown to the place of the stress, especially in such clusters of unemphatic words as were specified above. Without it no one can have any sense of harmony, either in verse or prose: and yet how little is commonly shown, and how little instruction is bestowed on a point so necessary to good reading. The common habit of false emphasis arises out of this ignorance, which confounds stress with emphasis. And surely no habit among those which are tolerated rouses one's prejudice more quickly against the reader on the score of his proper requirements for a man of education.

## CHAPTER IV.

## ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF A VERSE.

19. A VERSE is determined in quality by the order of the intervals and returns formerly mentioned, and in quantity by the number of them.

20. Each combination of interval and return, by which this order proceeds, is called a foot, being that on which the verse walks as it were. The interval may contain several syllables ; the return consists in general but of one.

21. The most simple combinations are of course dissyllabic, affording but one syllable for interval, as in Latin words, *rēgnā*, *pūdēns*, and in the English, *státely*, *remóte*. The latter of these feet is called in the classical tongues an iambus, the former a trochee. And the same terms are applied in modern languages, though improperly, wherever stress takes the place of the long syllable, as in the above English words.

22. The next in order are trisyllabic, affording two syllables for the interval, as in the Latin word



*sidera*, and our English word *hármony*, and in the Latin word *segetēs*, and our English word *maga-zíne*. The former are called dactyls, the latter anapæsts. The above word (and it is not a native) is the only anapæst in one word in our language, and it is not very distinctly that. But we have the foot in quite sufficient plenty as occupying part of one word, as in the word *devastátion*, or parts of two or three words, as in *the desíre*, *to the wóods*.

23. The two ancient languages could (as we saw) have more than one return in one word, as in the Latin words *cāndidōs*, *amīcōs*, *īnfāusta*; and some less common measures have the return extending over two syllables together, as in the Bacchiac metre. This, however, is obviously impossible in our languages which go by accent, and therefore such feet as the above words contain can be formed but by the junction of two or more words, as *lówely chīld*, *a góod úse*, *bright glóry*. They are, however, seldom or never used in our English metres, although their effect may be good to a short extent. Such metres might be the following:—

Lówely chīld, sweet the smíle ón thy chéek.

A góod úse is bád úse, if mén fáil to nóte tímes.

Fáir dáughter, why wéepest? Ó drý up thése téar-drops.

One reason of their unfrequent use may be the indistinctness of many of these accents, according to what was said in Art. 16. Thus the last line may appear in a measure founded on the foot contained in the Latin *iniqua*, and in our *abundant*.

24. The two ancient languages likewise used feet comprehending so much as even three returns, with one interval, as in their epitrite ; and three intervals with one return, as in their pæon ; besides the various combinations arising out of two intervals and two returns, as in the choriamb, Ionic, and antispast. But these are confined to their lyric poetry. Some of them are in our power also, as the choriamb, and antispast, and Ionic, as,

Próne in the dúst, liest alóne, daúghter of Týre? weáried with  
groán.

The lárk, soáring amid glóry, in heáven síngeth her loúd stóry.

Bright Séráphim, síng mérrily, shoút jóyfully.

In the bright béam the sublíme hóst to our Gód síngs.

And great has been the mistake of our lyric poets in not adopting measures peculiar to their department, corresponding to these. The Germans have managed better. Such feet as combine two or more returns in immediate consequence can of course be effected in our language, and in any versifying upon stress, only by hobbling through

one or more monosyllabic verbs or nouns as above, and as the first epitrite is formed by *the bright sún shínes*. On the contrary, the pæons abound in our longer words, as in *moderátion*, and a measure may be readily constructed upon them, as,

Liberty abundantly rejoiceth, and immóderately.

But it would clearly be a work of mere pedantry.

25. These compound feet are uncommon, and the grand staple of metre in all the European languages is made up of the dissyllabic feet in which the proportion of interval and return is in quantity 1 : 2 or 2 : 1, as in the iambus and trochee ; and of the trisyllabic feet, where these are equal, as in the anapæst and dactyl. As to accent, the case is reversed ; in the former the proportion of syllables is equal, in the latter in the proportion of 2 : 1 or 1 : 2. These are the simplest proportions, such as the ear readily catches. Other feet, like the cretic and amphibrach, which admit of no simpler division than in the proportion of 2 : 3, or its alternate, are too elaborate for common use.

26. The rule of quantity has one very especial advantage over that of stress. For it is obvious, that since the interval depends upon the quantity, and not on the number of its syllables, it will make no difference whether it be made up of one or two, or of two and four syllables,

so long as the sense of the return is maintained with sufficient distinctness. Hence the two short of the dactyl and anapæst may be replaced by a long syllable; that is, a spondee may be substituted for those feet, provided that the pure original foot recur often enough to remind the ear of the cadence. In the highly elaborate opening of the *Georgics* the dactyl is found to recur quite sufficiently often in the four first feet (where alone substitution is commonly allowed), though it does but in the proportion of 37 : 42. Hence also the tribrach may be substituted for the iambus and trochee.

27. But since the sense of the return depends upon one syllable, it is equally obvious that we cannot substitute two short for that one long, unless we preserve the proportions of the interval and return. Thus we can substitute the dactyl for the anapæst, because the return divides them equally ( $\cup \cup \text{—}$ ,  $\text{—} \cup \cup$ ); but we cannot substitute the anapæst for the dactyl, because then the division is not only unequal ( $\text{—} \cup \cup$ ,  $\cup \cup \text{—}$ ), but out of all harmonious proportion. So also the division is unequal between the iambus and trochee, and they can never be mutual substitutes. Still more, the amphibrach cannot stand for either dactyl ( $\text{—} \cup \cup$ ,  $\cup \text{—} \cup$ ) or anapæst ( $\cup \cup \text{—}$ ,  $\cup \text{—} \cup$ ), because it is impossible to divide it in the proportion

of either interval or return. But the tribrach, ∪ ∪ ∪, may stand for the trochee, ∟ ∪, because, though it seems to reverse the proportions of interval and return, as to number of syllables, yet it maintains the simplest of proportions 1 : 2.

28. The substitution of the dactyl is exceedingly common in anapæstic measures, often even to the exclusion of the original foot from a whole verse of the longest measure, except in the necessary termination, at least with the help of the spondee<sup>1</sup>. The apparent substitutions of the anapæst for the dactyl are mere cases of contraction or crasis, as *βορέης, fluviórum*.

29. Such are the rules of substitution on the exact rule of quantity, and great is the variety thus produced, allowing the poet to adjust the sound to the sense. But in the natural course of things, the bustling action of the legend occupies a less and less prominent part, and sentiment and themes of quiet life succeed and fill the space, and thus a poetry of a lower tone, more approaching to prose, comes on. Within two centuries of the day of the Iliad such a change took a decided place, and thenceforward in one department the chant degenerated into recitation, and then the dissyllabic measures, the trochaic, and iambic

<sup>1</sup> As in Aristoph. Ran. 1024.

began to displace the trisyllabic, the anapæstic, and dactylic. The former at first were composed of pure feet, or admitted only their exact substitute, the tribrach ( $\underline{\cup}$ ,  $\cup \cup \cup$  :  $\cup \underline{\cup}$ ,  $\cup \cup \cup$ ). But when the subjects to which they were applied came nearer still to common life, especially when they entered as the grand measures of the conversational part of dramatic poetry, such strictness was not only impossible for the poet, but also unsuitable both to the grave and to the easy tone which was now required. The recitation therefore became reduced more nearly to declamation by introducing the spondee into any of the alternate places, as soon as ever the line had supplied the key note, which it did in the trochaic with the very first foot, being a trochee ; while in the iambic, the ear was but prepared for it in the very first place, because the ictus enforcing the return of the pure foot at the end of the metre of two feet, by strongly drawing attention to it, left the first foot of secondary importance, and, on the contrary, falling at the beginning of the metre of two feet in the trochaic, left the second foot of secondary importance. Thus the sense of the measure was preserved quite sufficiently for the purpose, and both the weakness and monotony of the pure metre were corrected. But such relaxation of strictness necessarily led the way to more variety.

Both the dactyl and anapæst are equivalents to the spondee, and accordingly they also, under certain restrictions, gained admission into the iambic measure, which thus became exceedingly flexible, now suiting the stiffness of tragic pomp, and now the looseness of comic mirth.

30. But from all this excellent adaptation to a variety of subjects verse ruled by stress is utterly precluded. The interval being measured by the number of syllables, and not by their quantity, can neither be lengthened nor contracted. Still less can the syllable on which the stress falls be resolved, like that on which the long time falls, the stress being incapable of falling on more than one. Hence, the substitution of feet is impossible, and we see at once the utter hopelessness of putting the dactylic hexameter to any purpose but that of short lyric poems, by breaking it into two; in which case, we can preserve its pure form long enough. Indeed, so little sense have we of such substitution, that we pronounce all anapæstic lines just as if they were dactylic, putting our stress for the Latin accent even in Greek lines, and so violating the rule of the accent of that language, pronouncing, for instance, οὐλόμενην, instead of οὐλομένην. All that we can do is to imitate in our own fashion the licence of the above introduction of the spon-

dee, and to follow it up by an occasional introduction of the anapæst, by another distinct licence which the ancient measures included in the first, as in such lines as,

Thy personal vènture in the rebel's fight.

*Macbeth*, i. 3.

Thus we have attained, though less legitimately, to a measure of tolerable flexibility, for the purposes of tragedy and comedy, although it will not bear the slightest comparison, on the score of any excellence, with the ancient.

31. It seems natural that we should expect greater accuracy of measure in the beginning of a line, because we want, as it were, the key-note; and also at the end, because we ought to leave off with the fullest sense of the measure. But where this latter point has been secured, we need, in a series of lines, be less nice as to the former; and the first foot of the trimeter will endure so much variety as that of five feet, will even well accept it, since, by such difference, the beginning of the line is less likely to be confounded with the close of the preceding line. Thus, although no tragic poet would open his play with an anapæst in the first foot of the first line, except in case of a proper name<sup>2</sup>, nor, perhaps, in an early line; though the lax Euripides ventures a dactyl in

<sup>2</sup> Vid. *Aristoph. Ran.* 1209.



the third line of the Phænissæ, yet, when so many lines have been recited as to stamp the sense of the measure on the ear, he may securely employ it. And this cause combined with another, arising from the pauses, actually imposes greater strictness on the trimeter in the middle than in the beginning, since it will there endure the variety of but four feet, rejecting the anapæst. This leads us to the consideration of these two disturbing causes, so to call them.

32. I. The conclusion to any series of pure feet is quite arbitrary. And, therefore, in order to form a verse, we must mark the close, either by some violation of the measure, which can least of all be allowed there; or by keeping the measure invariably the same there, while it is allowed to vary throughout all the rest of the line. This latter, then, is the only alternative for the ancient metres. Yet all that can be done is to insist that the hexameter shall almost always conclude with a spondee following a dactyl; and, at all events, with a spondee, that foot being no licence, as it is in the trimeter, but so necessary a part of the verse, that one without is scarcely tolerable, and hardly, with less than an equal admixture, harmonious; and that in the trimeter, the last foot shall always be an iambus.

II. Yet it is clear that this alone would be

very insufficient provision. Since a spondee may follow a dactyl in any part of the hexameter, and an iambus occur in every place of the trimeter, we may readily lose our reckoning of time in lines of such length; and, therefore, come to a false ending, and begin with a false beginning, and thus derange the order of the lines. We must have other marks to look to. Thus we may make up a considerable list of verses formed by end running into beginning, as in Il. B. 848:—

. . . . . Παίονας ἀγκυλοτόξους  
Τηλόθεν ἰξ' Ἀμυδῶνος . . . . .

Though with greater difficulty, as in Œd. Tyr. 48:—

. . . . . Προθυμίας  
'Αρχῆς δὲ τῆς σῆς μηδαμῶς. . . . .

The very compounding of these extremes will show that there is something wanting still, besides the requisite feet, to compose a verse; and that considered as so composed, the pieces thus put together do not form harmonious and correct verses; and that, therefore, the ear rejects them, and will not blend the two. Such a break in the very middle of the hexameter is intolerable; and, therefore, supposing that we had lost our reckoning, and began a new line at Παίονας, the break at the end of the next word would remind us that we were not in the middle of the

line, which by simple measure we ought to be. And the want of the trochee before the concluding Cretic in the new trimeter, warns us that we are wrong, and remands us back. Indeed, it is astonishing how much indebted the lines of a trimeter are to the rule regarding the pause in the middle of the fifth in this respect.

33. This want of distinctness of close is of course still more evident in our modern metres, which are far from being so rich in resources. For an example, in our unrhymed heroic, let us take the following lines from the "Seasons," Spring, i. 48:—

Be gracious, heaven	for now laborious man,
Has done his part	ye fostering breezes blow;
Ye softening dews	ye tender showers descend,
And temper all:	

where the end of one line and beginning of the next form perfect verses, and the hearer may readily lose his reckoning for some time. The remedy sought has been rhyme. But this does too much. Not arising out of any modification of the measure it is foreign, and, therefore, inappropriate, and too strong. And even then it will not prevent a verse from being confounded with the one which rhymes to it, the note of close being indiscernible until the conclusion of the second verse: as in—

From Jesse's root | behold a branch arise,  
Whose sacred flower | with fragrance fills the skies.

We must, therefore, in despite of such foreign aid, still have recourse to the natural resources of verse. And these, as before, are afforded by the breaks, which are called pauses ; and their varied position is so necessary to the harmony of the line, that none, however accurate as to quantity or stress, and varied as to occurrence of other feet, can pass with us for a verse, without fulfilling the conditions which they impose. To these, therefore, we will now proceed.

## CHAPTER V.

## ON THE PAUSE.

34. **CLEARNESS** of utterance requires that we should make a short pause after every word which is not so intimately joined in sense to the following, that it conveys no idea without it, like the preposition before its case, the article before its noun, the conjunction before the sentence, and in short, the class of words already enumerated in Art. 17. These pauses will be longer in proportion to the fulness of meaning of the word after which we use them ; and may be divided into three classes, according to the degree of their strength.

I. The weakest, where it interposes between adjective and substantive.

II. When it falls after a verb, or noun, or relative interrogative.

III. When it coincides with a stop of any kind.  
Thus in the two lines :—

Quid | faciat | lætas | segetes | quo | sidere | terram |  
Vertere | Mæcenâs | ulmisque | adjungere | vites |

That after *lætas*, belongs to Class I. ; those after *quid, faciat, quo, sidere, ulmisque, adjungere*, to Class II. ; those after *segetes, vertere, Mæcenâs*, to Class III.

In such a line as—

O work of love unfeign'd truth peaceful bliss.

Let the reader pause after love, assigning *unfeign'd* as an epithet to *truth*, and he will find the metre entirely deranged ; while putting the stop after *unfeign'd*, he finds it run smoothly enough.

The weaker pauses are often absorbed by the stronger, which are close to them ; and, therefore, often stand in places where the stronger would not be allowed. Thus in—

Exciderant animo. | Manet | altâ mente repostum  
(Æn. i. 26),

the pause after *manet* is scarcely sensible, though it bisects the line, which would be intolerable in a strong pause.

35. The disposition of the several pauses evidently admits of the principle of interval and return, through the sense of the proportion of the parts into which they divide the line, as well as through the relation of their strength according to the above classes. Thus, both in the hexameter and trimeter, the pause in the middle of the third foot divides the line nearly in the proportion of

2:3; in the middle of the fourth of nearly 3:2; at the end of the fourth, of 1:2. These are the most simple and harmonious proportions. Here then is another foundation for harmony. Not, however, that this is peculiar to verse; but it belongs to prose also, although with fainter effect. The reader of Cicero cannot but have noticed what attention he has paid to this point. The compact and lapidary structure of the ancient languages gave their writers a great advantage, and, indeed, they sometimes much overwrought the matter, as did the school of Gorgias in Greek. The looser structure of the modern tongues cannot be managed to such effect, though it will admit of a very discernible harmony which is ever found in good writers, and has been pursued to an affectation, similar to that of the fore-mentioned Greek school, by the Euphuists.

36. But the reason of the faintness in prose, is that the spaces thus divided have no regularly assigned length; and therefore, the proportion of the divisions to the whole is by no means so appreciable as in poetry, where each verse is the whole, and is always of the same length, and affords therefore one continual uniform standard whereby to measure. And not only do we thus discern the proportion of parts of the same verse, but also the relative proportions in two or more, especially

in the case of the principal pauses ; which, by dividing one line equally, others in the proportions before mentioned, supply a rich fund of harmony, and an agreeable ring of changes.

37. These pauses are reducible to a still further classification besides that which is based upon the nature of the words, as parts of speech, and upon the construction of the sentence as to periods. They hold certain positions both in each foot and in the whole line, and therefore come under a two-fold consideration.

38. I. As to their position in the foot, they will be of three kinds.

They may fall after the first or second syllable of the foot, and will therefore fall

1. On the return or a long syllable, as in

Quid faciat | lætas | segetes | quo sidere terram.

Ὡ τίκνα Κάδμου | τοῦ πάλα | νέα τροφή.

Roll along | thou boundless ocean.

This pause gives a steady and solemn gait to the measure, from the association of the length of the syllable. This may be called the syllabic pause.

2. On the interval or a short syllable, as in

Liber | et alma | Ceres, nostro si lumine terras.

Δείσαντες | ἡ στήρξαντες | ὄς θίλοντος ἄν.

There towering | cities | and the forests | green.



This may be called the trochaic pause, from the foot which it follows. It gives a brisker movement, from the nature of that foot, to the verse, and is more frequent in Greek than in Latin. Their different use of these two pauses augments that difference of style which appears in Homer and Virgil; the former being lively, the latter stately. Both these pauses give a most agreeable variety to the line, inasmuch, as starting from them afresh, we begin a new measure, and in the contrary direction, as anapæstic after dactylic, trochaic after iambic. This is very striking where the pause is near the middle of the line, as in

*Vi superum sævæ | mēmōrēm Jūnōnis ōb irām.*

*Ἰερῆς ἐγὼ μὲν | Ζῆνός | οἶδέ | τ' ἡθιῶν.*

*Thy forests | Windsor | ánd thy gréen retréats.*

### 3. They will fall at the end of a foot, as in .

*Imperio premit | ac vinclis et carcere | frenat.*

*Ὅς πᾶν | ἐμὸν | δόσσοντος. ἡ γὰρ εὐρυχείς.*

*Yet wide | was spread | their fame | in ages past.*

This pause, dividing the verse according to its constituent elements, demands sparing use, otherwise the repetition of the elementary parts seems to mince the line into repeated divisions, producing exceeding harshness and abruptness. We have indeed an extreme case in the line of Ennius:

*Romæ | mcenia | terruit | impiger | Hannibal | armis.*

This, however, shows on a large scale its intrinsic monotony and harshness, and the need of care in managing it. In place of the variety of the two former pauses we have mere repetition. This may be called the foot pause. We cannot feel any of its harshness of course in the first foot ; on the contrary, it is rather pleasing there, from the clear sense which it gives us of the incipient measure, as in

Omnes	ut tecum meritis pro talibus annos
Exigat	et pulcrâ faciat te prole perentem.

*Æn.* i. 74, 75.

But with the second foot comes the repetition, as in

Impulit | in latus | ac venti velut | agmine | facto.

A line which seems designedly constructed in order to express the abruptness of the action, having no less than four of these pauses. But when the line consists of an even number of feet, as do those of the hexameter and trimeter, and so admits of bisection by this pause, it is then almost always avoided, or else palliated, and indeed absorbed, by using a strong pause in close neighbourhood, which shall divert all attention from it, as in *Æn.* i. 26. 76 :—

Exciderant animo.	Manet	altâ mente repostum.
Æolus hæc contra.	Tuus,	O Regina, quid optes,

or else it is purposely sought, in order to give a

strong and particular expression, as that of the struggle of the Persian army in Pers. 512,

*Θρήκεν περάσαντες. | μόγις πολλῷ πόνῳ,*

where indeed every foot but one, being followed by the pause, is bare, so to say, and the resulting effect of interruption and slowness is increased by the alliteration. In like manner how significantly expressive of the heaviness of heart, and slow pondering of mind of Œdipus, is that line Œd. T. 738,

*ὦ Ζεῦ, τί μου δρᾶσαι | βεβούλευσαι πέρι;*

where the monotony arising from the bisection is aided by the want of pauses in the end of the line, as it is in the former example by the want of them in the first part. But, except in such rare cases, the ancients had the good taste most carefully to avoid the bisecting pause.

39. But a measure formerly prevalent in our poetry, and forming still the staple of the French, is constructed on the rule of having the bisecting pause. This is the Alexandrine, in which the second part exactly reflects the first, as in

*Thy realm for ever lasts | thy own Messiah reigns.*

A reading of a very few lines of the "Polyolbion" will be sufficient to convince any one of the intolerable monotony of such a measure. How utterly

unfit it is to serve dramatic purposes is evident : yet the French have no other. Can we wonder that their tragedies contain much more declamation than action, and narrative than representation ?

40. II. As to the position of the pauses in the whole line, we must refer back to the act of recitation. At the beginning of the line the breath wants least relief, and little harmony has been struck for the mind to stay and dwell on ; hence the pauses will there be shortest, and therefore weakest, but they will become longer and stronger as the verse proceeds, until it has advanced half way. There, at an equal interval from each end, the breath is best relieved, and the mind stays to review the harmony ; here, therefore, the pause is longest. From this point, both the demands of breath and the sense of the harmony having been partially satisfied, the pauses become shorter and weaker.

But we have seen that there is an insuperable objection to the pause exactly in the middle. Hence the strongest pauses in use are those closest to the middle, falling after the syllable which precedes it or follows it. So marked are these two, that they commonly go by a peculiar term, *cæsura* ; and one or other is all but necessary to every line of any length. Hence they fall in the middle of the

third and fourth feet of a verse of six feet, as the hexameter and trimeter, in the latter of which measures they were never both of them omitted, except in two or three examples, where expression has been sought at their expense, as in the trimeter lines last quoted. And Spenser sometimes employs them, as in "Fairy Queen":—

Upon his foe, a dragon | horrible and stern.—I. i. 3.

Escaped hardly, | hardly | praised his wedlock good.—III. ix. 42.

Yet spake she seldom, | but thought more the less she said.—

V. xii. 29.

41. The absence of pauses is no less expressive than their presence. When we have missed them at their usual places in the early part of the line, we, both from want of relief to the breath and disappointment, experience a drag which finds a vent when at length a pause comes towards the end of the line, and leaves an impression of slowness, heaviness, and difficulty. Thus, how expressive of something protracted is Addison's line,

And in the smooth description | murmur still;

and of the torpor of incessant grief in Lucret. iii. 920,

*Insaatiabiliter | deflebitus | æternumque.*

42. Since the pauses arising out of the metre are weak towards the beginning and end of the

line, and it is advisable that the pauses arising out of the sense should not jar with them, but go along with them, hence the full stops are seldom used in those places, except in the short questions and quick replies of dramatic poetry, but occur rather towards the middle of the line.

43. We are now enabled to estimate the advantage which the pauses supply for defining the close of a verse. They throw a great difficulty in the way of a verse being made up, to the ear, out of the end and beginning of consecutive lines, if at least they be arranged with common care. It requires some search to find an undoubted example of such a verse in either the heroic or dramatic poetry of the ancients; but in modern poetry, it must be allowed, the case is very different. It would seem that the habitual use of so decided a close as rhyme gives has drawn away the attention of our poets from the arrangement of the pauses, even where rhyme had been dispensed with. Let us take, for example, "Paradise Lost," i. 41.

If he opposed,	and with ambitious aim
Against the throne	and monarchy of God
Raised impious war	in heaven, and battle proud
With vain attempt.	

It is plain that if the hearer lost his reckoning, as amid such loose construction he easily might,

and took *if he opposed* for the end of the line, the series of verses would be entirely altered to his ear, the end and beginning of consecutive lines making perfect verses between them. But such confusion cannot happen in Ib. i. 22.

And mad'st it pregnant. | What in me is dark  
 Illumine. | What is low raise and support,  
 That to the height | of this great argument.

But this fault can be avoided by no possible care by the composer of the Alexandrine. It is plain that "Polyolbion," xi. 1, &c., owes the distinction of its verses entirely to rhyme:—

With as unwearied wings,	and in as high a gait,
As when we first set forth,	observing every state,
The Muse from Cambria comes	with pinions summ'd and sound,
And having put herself	upon the English ground.

Can we wonder that such a metre was broken down into a measure proper for ballads?

44. We have confined our notice to the longer, which are also the more ordinary, measures, because they exhibit the most plain examples. The shorter, which are the lyrical measures, are indeed subject to the same rule, but their shortness prevents such predominance of any pause, that it should become almost indispensable; for instance, the Sapphic has a favourite cæsura after the fifth syllable, but not so indispensable but that a very

regularly constructed ode, as Hor. Od. i. 10, will do without it three times in the space of fifteen lines. The following verses of that ode show the favourite pauses :—

Voce		formasti		catus		et decoræ
Ilio		dives		Priamus		relicto.

And the following the like in the two last lines of the alcaic, from Hor. Od. ii. 1 :—

Tellure		victorum		nepotes
Cecropio		repetes		cothurno.



## CHAPTER VI.

## ON THE PAUSES OF THE HEXAMETER.

45. WE will begin with the longest of the ordinary and regular measures which are known in recognized European poetry. From this greater length it has its principal pauses more marked and fixed than any other. It will be worth while, therefore, to dwell upon it with some minuteness, and derive from it such illustration as will save much discussion on the other measures.

Consisting of six feet, all which must be either dactyls or spondees, the hexameter must commence every foot with a long syllable. Hence there will be six places for pause after this. And since, also, there may be five dactyls, there will be five places for pause after the trochee contained in the dactyl: and since there are five feet before the final, there will be five places for pause after a foot. Hence altogether there will be sixteen places where the pause may fall. The average of the number of places where it actually does fall

is, in Homer and Virgil, as near as can be, nine in two lines; though of the two poets, taken in a series of lines, Homer will be found to employ rather a smaller number than Virgil, owing to the more polysyllabic character of his language.

46. The following scale will present in one view the relative frequency of the occurrence of these pauses in the course of a hundred lines:—

Foot I.	After the first long syllable . . .	in Homer	10,	in Virgil	20
	„ first trochee . . .	„	21	„	22
	„ first foot . . .	„	40	„	35
II.	„ second long syllable	„	47	„	48
	„ second trochee . .	„	11	„	11
	„ second foot . . .	„	16	„	6
III.	„ third long syllable .	„	39	„	79
	„ third trochee . .	„	59	„	11
	„ third foot . . .	„	6	„	6
IV.	„ fourth long syllable	„	29	„	79
	„ fourth trochee . .	„	1	„	3
	„ fourth foot . . .	„	59	„	45
V.	„ fifth long syllable .	„	17	„	1
	„ fifth trochee . . .	„	58	„	43
	„ fifth foot . . . .	„	22	„	54
VI.	„ sixth long syllable .	„	13	„	1
Sum in one hundred lines . . . .			448	„	464

Thus there are, as nearly as can be, nine pauses to two lines: and the average number of pauses in the part of the line preceding the closing dactyl and spondee will be rather more than three; three, however, is the more regular number, as we might expect, since an extent of from eight to twelve

syllables are best divided thus, according to the common length of Greek and Latin words. Thus the model is,

*Extinctum | nymphæ | crudeli | funere Daphnim.*—*Ecl.* v. 20.

*Pulverulenta | coquat | maturis | solibus æstas.*—*Georg.* i. 66.

At least in the Virgilian hexameter: and however partially broken by inferior pauses, this arrangement prevails in the main, as in *Georg.* i. 34. 29 :—

*Panditur | ipse tibi | jam brachia | contrahit ardens.*

*An Deus | immensi | venias maris | ac tua nautæ.*

47. There are some circumstances attending these pauses which require notice. In the first place, since the sense of the grammar and of the metre should not be found contradictory, the stops of the sentence and the pauses of the metre should be of the same relative strength. The stops, therefore, will generally be faint in the beginning, and increase in strength towards the middle, where they become fullest, and thence will decline again towards the end of the line. Of course this rule is not kept with severe exactness. But where it is palpably violated, some good reason is seen why it should have so been.

48. To take them now in order, as to the pause after the long syllable; it is of course very faint

after the first, so that the monosyllable commencing a line is almost always intimately connected with the following word without a stop, as in *Gens inimica, Fert animus*: or if there be a stop of any fulness, the abruptness is subdued by the recitation being carried immediately on to the next word by elision, as in those instances produced by Hermann (El. Doctr. Metr. 2. xxvi.) from *Iliad*, *Æ.* 51, *Odyss.* M.

Βάλλ'. 'Ασι δὲ πυρραὶ, κ.τ.λ.  
 'Οψ'. 'Ημος δ' ἐπὶ δόρπον, κ.τ.λ.

But the above list shows that this pause is rather unfrequent altogether.

When we come to the third and fourth long syllables, we arrive at the cæsuras of the line, as it is constructed by Virgil and the Latin poets. They are very strongly marked, falling each close to the middle of the line, and a change of measure to anapæstic ensuing from them. Hence these are the favourite places for the full stop, as in *Æn.* i. 76. 110:—

*Æolus hæc contra. | Tuus, O regina, quid optes.*  
*Dorsum immane mari summo. | Tres Euris ab alto.*

After the fifth long syllable the pause is infrequent even in Homer, and scarcely used by Virgil except in case of a proper name, as in *Æn.* iii. 401,

*Lyctius Idomeneus: hic illa ducis | Melibœi.*

Otherwise he breaks its strength by a neighbouring pause of greater strength, as in *Georg. i. 80*:—

*Ne saturare fimo pingui pudeat | sola | neve.*

Once or twice indeed Virgil copies the familiar pause of *Πηληϊάδεω | Ἀχιλλῆος* somewhat pedantically. And since this is far removed from the influence of any other pause on either side, it becomes so marked, that a vowel will stand before it without elision, as in the Homeric example. Thus we have *Ecl. x. 12, Aonia | Aganippe*, and in *Æn. ix. 477, Fœmineo | ululatu*.

And here we may remark, that where this long syllable stands without elision, or is produced, being short, it is commonly preceded by a dactyl, as in

*Georg. i. 4.—Sit pecori | apibus.*

*Æn. iv. 64.—Pectoribus | inhians*

222.—*Tunc sic Mercurium adloquitur | ac—*

Perhaps the reason is, that the dactyl stands in greater opposition to the anapæstic measure which follows this pause; and especially where an anapæst also follows it immediately, as in the two former instances of the above three lines. There the pause is nearly as strong as the close of a line, and will bear the same licence. The line

*Ter sunt conati | imponere Pelio Ossam*

is a designed violation of this more common rule.

We should not expect a stop after the sixth long syllable, nor does it occur in Virgil, except after such phrases as "hominum | rex," or as "Humi | bos, exiguus | mus, magnis | Dis," where the effect sought is clear, and the pause is but weak. In *Ecl.* vii. 35,—

Nunc te marmoreum pro tempore fecimus. At | tu,—

the very weak, if any, pause after the sixth long syllable, is quite absorbed in the full stop at the end of the fifth foot.

The pause after the long syllable gives much steadiness and stateliness to the line, which thus marches as it were: it is characteristic of the Latin.

49. But the trochaic pause gives a light step to the measure, and is as characteristic of the Greek. It is not, however, common until we come to the third foot: there it is a *cæsura* with Homer, and imparts its lively influence to the line; while it is unfrequent with Virgil. But both poets have a great reluctance to the use of the fourth trochee. We seldom meet with such a line as *Æn.* i. 77,

Explorare labor. Mihi jussa | capessere fas est;

where, however the strength of the preceding

cæsura weakens its effect. We quite lose sight of it in such a line as, *Æn.* i. 10,

*Insignem pietate virum | tot | adire labores.*

After the fifth trochee both poets have a favourite rest, Homer more especially; while Virgil dwells more on the rest at the end of the fifth foot, which Homer uses comparatively seldom: both poets thus maintaining their characteristic step.

50. The pause after the foot divides the line into its units, and therefore requires especial caution towards the middle of the line. After the first foot it is very agreeable, allowing us to start with a full sense of the measure, especially when it follows a dactyl. Also at the end of the fourth foot its good effect is felt by its marking off the regular close of the line from the rest; and at the end of the fifth of course, distinctly marking off the dactyl, it is in its place. But after the second, and especially the third, foot, where it breaks the line exactly in two, it hardly occurs, except when weakened and made insensible by a neighbouring pause. Thus Virgil would not begin a line with *conticuerunt*. But it is insensible in

*Vina bonus | quæ | deinde.*

The common method of deadening the pause in these two places with Virgil, is to put a pyrrhic dissyllable before the pause, which enfeebles it by the close neighbourhood of another, as in *Æn.* ii. 2. 776.

Inde toro | pater | *Æneas* sic orsus ab alto.  
Quid tantum insano | juvat | indulgere dolori.

In the former of these cases, he almost always places a pause again in the middle of the fourth foot, as above. And whenever he adds a stop to the pause, he is wont to break its force by putting a monosyllable after it, as in *Æn.* i. 52,

*Æoliam* | venit. | Hic | vasto rex *Æolus* antro.

In the latter case, he very often combines a stop with the pause which precedes or follows, and thus most effectually breaks its force, as in *Æn.* ii. 27. 354,

Panduntur portæ : | juvat | ire, et Dorica castra.  
Sic animis juvenum | furor | additus. Inde lupi cœu.

Sometimes he will even combine a stop with the pause itself, but then he breaks it, as in *Æn.* ii. 528. *Georg.* i. 358.

Porticibus longis | fugit, | et vacua atria lustrat.  
Montibus audiri | fragor ; | aut resonantia longe.

And not only does Virgil terminate the foot in a



pyrrhic dissyllable in these places; but very frequently in others also, as in

Georg. i. 363.—*Deserit atque altam supra | volat | ardea nubem.*

356.—*Continuo ventis surgentibus aut | freta | ponti.*

In which last line, however, there is hardly a sensible pause between “aut” and “freta.”

The pause at the end of the fourth foot is a favourite with the Greek, and especially with the Bucolic, poets, who employ the dactyl before it. The *Odyssey* opens with a line containing it:

*Ἀνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα, πολύτροπον. | δεῖ μάλα πολλὰ.*

Here the full stop is very frequent in the Greek. A stop of any strength at the end of the fifth foot does not agree with the weakness of the pause there. It seldom therefore occurs; and then its force is broken by the following word being closely referred to the preceding, as in

*Æn. x. 195.—Ingentem remis Centaurum promovet. | Ille*

*Georg. i. 80.—Ne saturare fimo pingui pudeat sola : | neve*

*Ecl. vii. 35.—Nunc te marmoreum pro tempore fecimus. | At tu—*

51. In their very nature these pauses afford, as we see, a most distinct and agreeable variety, and adapt the line to the manifold expression of thought and affection, and, above all, to the turns of narrative, through the quicker or slower movement which they impart to the line. But in their

number also they contribute to a variety which may be called inexhaustible. For suppose that there were but four pauses to a line: then, since the whole number admissible is sixteen, there may follow 1820 lines in continued succession, and yet each of different structure on this single point. The average, however, we have seen to be that of nine pauses to two lines. The series must therefore be a much longer one. Were the number of pauses five, the series would be as high as 4368. But when we combine with this the variety arising out of the permutations of the dactyl and spondee, there appears no practical limit to the changes which the measure can assume. Those permutations in the first four feet are sixteen. Taking the above series at 3000, we may then have  $16 \times 3000$  consecutive lines of different metrical construction; or, in other words, as much as two *Iliads* and two *Odysseys* together may be written without repetition of a single line of the very same metrical form. We indeed here suppose that these two causes of variety act always independently of each other, as they do not. Still we see enough to be struck with the wonderful power of this metre, and we must allow it to be the prince of measures, and admirably suited for narrative poetry. How do we sigh for its flexibility, when we read the poor and monotonous

strains with which modern epic poetry must be content.

52. Such then is this prodigious variety of structure, that it must be sheer negligence indeed, nay even an effort of perverseness, when a line unites with the following in making a complete and correct verse between them. And how beautiful is the simplicity of the close! It presents but the sequence of a dactyl and spondee, which admits but of two varieties according to its more regular arrangement. These bring the ear distinctly to the close by their recurrence amid the unlimited variety of the rest of the line, at the same time that they do not cloy it with a monotonous ring.

53. We have had occasion to remark on the obvious difference of the structure of this measure by Homer and by Virgil, as to the arrangement of the pauses. This is the result of the difference of the character of the two languages, rather than of the difference of the genius of the two authors, which is after all but a particular case implied in the former difference. The Latin is more spondaic. And therefore, while in the Greek hexameter the recurrence of the dactyl in proportion to that of the spondee is as high as 25 : 11, in the Latin it is but as 9 : 11, or little more than a third of such proportion. Hence we cannot wonder that

the proportion of the number of trochaic pauses in Homer and in Virgil should be in the high ratio of 2 : 1. This very superior liveliness in the style of the narrative of the Greek has, without doubt, a large share in contributing to the feeling that Homer is telling us what he has seen, Virgil what he has read ; and is one of the means of that unapproachable superiority, on the whole, which he must ever maintain among the composers of epic poetry.

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## CHAPTER VII.

## ON THE PAUSES OF THE TRIMETER.

54. NOTHING displays the richness of the resources of the Greek tongue, as to the various and suitable means of expression, than the invention of two metres of such distinct character for two distinct departments of poetry, as the Hexameter and Trimeter. Here, as elsewhere, all the modern tongues exhibit poverty itself in the comparison. On going from one measure to the other we are immediately struck with the essential difference. It is indeed a descent; for the trimeter is very inferior in its capability. It is constructed of a shorter foot, which however is admitted to the same number of six. And it allows of fewer pauses, and is deficient in variety and sonorousness of close. All, in short, warns us that we are come nearer to the province of prose, and from the recitation of the bard to the declamation of the actor—from narrative to conversation.

55. We find at once quite a different principle

of construction. The spondee is introduced not as an exact equivalent in time, but as an avowedly different foot called in to modify the pace of the line, and impart stability to its undulating movement. And this foot brings in also its equivalents under certain regulations, so that this dissyllabic measure allows of three trisyllabic feet, the tribrach as the equivalent of the iambus, the dactyl and anapæst as equivalents of the spondee. A great variety is thus obtained. But since it arises from foreign help, and not out of a development of the measure itself, it wants both the extent, and force, and beauty of that which the hexameter affords.

56. The introduction of these feet must of course be kept within such bounds that it shall not derange the line. And therefore, where greater care was bestowed, as by the two earlier tragedians, who maintained a higher tone than the third, provision was made that those essential features, the pauses of the line, should not be affected. Therefore the two short syllables, which, on the resolution of the spondee, take place of the one short of the iambus, were not allowed to interfere with their regulation, and no pause was admitted after either one or both, but the anapæst to which they belonged was contained in one word, such as *μεγάλην*, not in two, as in *τρίς | ἔπειτα, μέγα |*

*τῶτο*; the former of which gives an iambic instead of trochaic movement after the pause, as in that place it should: the latter comes after two short syllables instead of one, and so quite deranges the proper pause. Other ways, in which these substitutions are restricted, will appear when we come to consider the pauses in particular.

57. The number of pauses is altogether eleven: for six can fall in the middle of the foot; after each of these the movement becomes trochaic: and five can fall at the end of a foot; after which the movement still continues iambic. The following scheme will show the comparative frequency of the occurrence of these pauses within the range of 100 lines of Sophocles.

Foot I.	In middle of first foot.	21
	At end of ditto	35
II.	In middle	50
	At end	11
III.	In middle	80
	At end	6
IV.	In middle	60
	At end	31
V.	In middle	18
	At end	52
VI.	In middle	2
		<hr/>
		Sum 366

Or 3.66 to a line, *i. e.* about 7 to two lines.

58. In the first foot the more regular construction restrained not only the anapæst, but the

dactyl also within a word. It is obvious that it never could be allowed to be broken into a trochee followed by a short syllable, as *ταῦτα* | *μελεῖται*, since such a pause is inadmissible at the beginning of an iambic line, uttering the very reverse of its measure at starting. And there would be a reluctance to inclose in any place a pyrrhic within two pauses, since they should, on the principles of the verse, inclose but one short syllable. Hence a dactyl distributed between two words, the first of which was a long syllable, such as *ἡ πόσις*, was avoided. But in fact the dactyl is rare at all in the first place in the more regular measure. Nor can we wonder, since it runs in the contrary direction, that of the trochee, and is therefore not very suitable for opening an iambic movement. Hence the anapæst is much more common in this place.

A favourite pause falls in the middle of the second foot. This pushes the line as it were into a brisk movement as early as a sense of the trochaic pace could be borne. Compare the sixteenth line with the seventeenth of the *Œdipus Tyrannus*. At the end it is rare, on account of the close neighbourhood of the principal cæsuræ.

As in the Virgilian hexameter, we find the principal pauses, that is, cæsuras, in the middle of the third and fourth feet: supplying also a similar variety by change of foot to the opposite, the



iambic becoming trochaic, on the recitation starting from them. The former of these places presents that which is the favourite, and predominates in the proportion of 4 : 3. Many lines employ both, as in *Ced. T. 7*:—

*\* Ἄλλων ἀκούειν | αὐτὸς | ὧδ' ἐλήλυθα.*

This former pause, the penthimimeral, as it is called, is a main reason for rejecting the anapæst as a substitute for the spondee in the third foot; for it must divide it in one of the following ways,

*\* Ἀπρακτα ταῦτα | λέγει  
\* Ἐδεξάμην μέγα | δῶρον  
\* Ἐγλήσα μόρσιμον | ἄχθος,*

all of which are objectionable on the principle laid down in *Art. 56*. Besides that the mind, being so accustomed through this pause as to feel its place, even where it does not occur, will not tolerate two syllables instead of one in it, and therefore rejects also such a line as

*Καὶ μὴν ἄνευ θεράποντος | ἔξηλθεν δόμων.*

Thus, under no circumstances, can the anapæst stand in the third foot.

But the same foot is the favourite place of the dactyl, which is so introduced, that the penthimimeral pause falls after its long syllable, and then the trochaic movement commences with a

tribrach ; which, however, on the principle above laid down, should not commence with a dissyllable, at least on the principle of construction followed by Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides in his earlier plays. Similarly the favourite position of the tribrach in the fourth place is that which places its first syllable just before the hepthimimerd cæsura, and the remaining in a word which more than contains the rest ; and the fifth foot is most commonly in this case pure, as in Orest. 24,

*Ἄρσῃν τ' Ὀρέστης, μητρὸς | ἀνοσιωράτης.*

Less regular is ib. 74,

*Τλήμων Ὀρέστης μητρὸς ὅδε φονεὺς ἔφν.*

It is comparatively rare where this cæsura does not occur to break the tribrach, as in ib. 60,

*Προὔπεμψεν ἐς δῶμ' ἡμέτερον· ἔστιν δ' ἔσω.*

Add CEd. T. 960. But not even Euripides, still less Æschylus, could have written such a line as has been palmed on him in Pr. V. 362,

*Τυφῶνα θοῦρον, πᾶσιν δὲ ἀνέστη θεοῖς.*

Sophocles seldom uses it at all, except where a proper name occurs.

So rare is the bisecting pause, that some have treated the lines which present it as corrupt. We

have, however, seen reason for its use, for the sake of peculiar expression ; and something must be allowed in the way of indulgence, or on the plea of variety of expression, to the poet, as in

‘Αλλ’ ὃν πόλις στυγεῖ | σὸ τιμήσεις νεκρόν.

Most commonly it takes place after elision, as in *Ced. T. 46*, so as to partake of the nature of the hepthimimeral. It sometimes becomes insensible, from the close neighbourhood of another pause, as in *Ced. T. 77*,

Μὴ δρῶν ἂν εἶην | πᾶνθ’, | ὅς’ ἂν δηλοῖ θεός.

The pause at the end of the fourth, leaves the rest of the line like the commencement of a fresh line, and thus causing it to seem to overflow into the next, gives a freedom which brings the passage nearer to the tone of common dialogue. It does not, however, occur so often as might be expected, not only because the tragic poet sought to maintain some elevation, but because its combination with the same pause in the preceding or following lines included a verse, however internally incorrect, and produced thus more vagueness than could be allowed. For the same reason the pause at the end of the second foot is rare.

The pause at the end of the fifth foot is very common. It serves to mark off the close by

leaving an iambus in the final word : and hence also the infrequency of the pause in the middle of this foot, which leaves a cretic in the final word. In this case the effect was generally broken by a pause at the end of the fourth, which brings out an iambic close, as in

. . . . . Τοῦ λόγου | τοῦτ' | ἔξερω.

Or they made the iambic movement clear, by keeping the fifth foot an iambus, as in

. . . . . καὶ πεισόντες | ὑστέρων,

So that they could not admit such terminations as

. . . . . τοὺτους | ἔξερω.  
. . . . . πεισόντων | ὑστέρων.

The fifth foot comes so near to the close that great caution is required, so much so, that even the tribrach was admitted but under very rare and peculiar qualification. Of course, then, the dactyl was avoided, which, in addition to the fault of the tribrach which confuses the sense of the final iambus by running into its short syllable with two short, has others of its own, as having only indirectly, through the licence of the spondee, a place in the line. The anapæst also is quite inadmissible, when divided between two words, were it only on the principle which excluded it

from the third place : and when contained in a trisyllable, it still disturbs the regular trochaic flow of the line, which is felt on quitting the place of the first *cæsura*.

The close is faint indeed, compared with that of the hexameter, but quite accords with the more quiet pace of the iambic rhythm, which came so near to that of common speech : and when even such strictness as this had was relaxed by introducing the spondee and its equivalents, the measure was admirably suited to the purposes of the tragic and comic poets ; the latter, indeed, by their further licences, in admission of feet and neglect of pauses, brought it down as near to prose as possible.

59. The number of pauses admissible being eleven, and the number admitted being usually four, or rather seven to two lines, there may follow in series about as many as 330 lines of different construction on this point. This is hardly a tenth part of the number afforded by the hexameter : it admits, however, of more variety still, from the variety of its constituent feet, and will, on this account only, allow of 240 changes. Hence altogether 79,200 lines of different construction may follow in series, or more than twice as many Greek plays as exist may be written without the repetition of the same construction of the line, on the

same supposition as was made in the case of the hexameter. So large is the scope, and free is the compass, within which the Greek constructed its two grand measures for epic and tragic poetry, which are each as different from the other in character, and peculiarly adapted to their subjects, as language seems able to allow.

60. The very feet of those measures, namely, the dactyl and iambus, are of quite a different character. The first has a roll forwards, the latter a fling backwards: the first seems fitted to carry the imagination on its course, the second the reflection; the former adapted to epic majesty and didactic description, the latter to moral sententiousness and returns of dialogue. Through use of the spondee, the hexameter can unfold or draw up its ample robes, like an Ionian matron, with most imposing dignity, now swelling up to seventeen syllables, then shrinking to thirteen, as when we compare

*Quadrupedante pedum sonitu quatit ungula campum,*

with

*Olli inter sese magni vi brachia tollunt.*

While through the same use, though that be not in the legitimate way of an equivalent, the trimeter, like a Doric girl, can give now and then a flirt or two to her kirtle through the extent of from

twelve to fifteen syllables (in the pure tragic form), as on comparing CEd. T. 966, 967,

Κλάζοντας ὄρνις, ὧν ὑφηγητῶν ἐγὼ  
Κρανεῖν ἐμελλον πατίρα τὸν ἐμὸν; ὁ δὲ θανών.

Perhaps this difference of character could not be more forcibly exhibited than by the juxtaposition in which Horace has placed these measures in the sixteenth of his Epodes. These both are remarkably regular, the trimeter consisting of pure iambs, and having invariably the cæsure in the middle of the third, which is also mostly the case with the hexameter: thus they are brought together in their essential forms, so that we can discern most clearly their distinctive differences. What a remarkable change do we experience when the majestic roll of the hexameter, with its sonorous close, is succeeded by the uniform alternate step of the trimeter, with its faint termination! It is greater than that between marching and walking. The same effect is evident, when we compare the description of an event given by Homer, and by a tragic poet in the mouth of a messenger, especially in the play of the Persæ, or Seven against Thebes, which come so completely on the same ground with the epic poet. With all their liveliness of description, what a prosaic poverty do those passages exhibit compared with

any similar in Homer. The sense of the manner in which his measure would have handled them haunts us as we read. We are looking at a meeting-house with our head full of a church, or hearing its service with our ears yet ringing with the rich tones of our chanted liturgy.

But if the trimeter be so inferior, what are we to think of the one measure with which modern epic and tragedy must both needs be content, shorter as it is by a foot, and regulated by mere stress. It does, indeed, appear poverty itself. Nothing but a resolute forgetfulness of the ancient measures can make us feel any satisfaction with it. Take up the very best translation out of the many which have been made of fine passages in Homer or Virgil, after having read the original, and then how lamentable appears the inadequacy of the copy! Or compare a cleverly translated passage of Milton into Greek hexameter, or of Shakespeare into Greek trimeter, and then how wonderfully improved do they seem!



## CHAPTER VIII.

## ON THE PAUSES OF THE ALEXANDRINE.

61. THE name "Alexandrine" is applied in the French and in the English to two measures, which have no other resemblance than that they consist of the same number of clear syllables, though not of feet, and have uniformly the bisecting pause; the foot being in the French the anapæst, in the English the iambus. Yet notwithstanding the coincidence of the latter with the Greek trimeter, it seems so little to have been founded upon it, that its history shows that it is nothing more than the former reduced into correspondence with the rhythm of the language, which is iambic, as that of the French is anapæstic: and for the origin of the former we are on every ground of probability referred to the dactylic pentameter, as pronounced according to accent, as

*Thebáni média non sine mâtre dúces.*

the verse containing the feminine rhyme being considered the primitive type.

62. The bisecting pause being so very strong as to blunt our sense almost to any other, it is not worth while to give any list of the pauses contained in this line, especially since in our language the measure, considered as one verse, has long ago been obsolete: and where it is interjected, as at great intervals it sometimes is, among our ten-syllabled iambic lines, since it then comes single, the comparison of the pauses of two consecutive lines on which the sense of their harmony so much depends, is lost. It needs but to be observed, that from the monosyllabic nature of our language, the two pauses which are next in strength, coming each one syllable before and one after this bisecting pause, can seldom both of them be avoided; and the first comes continually together with it, and gives a most monotonous ring at the middle of the verse, from line to line, their *cæsura* falling on a monosyllable, as in "Polyolbion," x. 1,

Awhile thus taking | breath, | our way yet fair in view,  
 The Muse her former | course | doth seriously pursue,  
 From Penmaen's craggy | height | to try her sally wings,  
 Herself long having | bathed | in the delicious springs.

Thus our Alexandrine is even more intolerable than the French, exceeding even that in the dull repetition of equal parts, as if the evil genius of versification had not already invented enough. It is

truly in the garden of poetry that which Pope ridiculed in the gardens of his day.

Grove nods at grove, each alley has its brother :  
And half the platform just reflects the other.

We have seen, indeed, that Spenser occasionally violates this rule of uniformity (40) ; but dared he have so done in a series of lines, such as Drayton uses. Amid such rigour the ear could hardly endure the licence. Happily, therefore, the "Polyolbion" is the latest poem which our language affords constructed on this measure, although not the only poem ; for the measure is as ancient in our language as the thirteenth century, in which lived Robert of Gloucester, whose historical poem on England might have led Drayton, antiquarian as he was, to adopt the same metre for his topographical poem on the same. So unfit, however, was it henceforward found, that it was not even revived among foreign importations at the period of the general debasement of our poetry by French imitators, under the auspices of the Frenchified Charles II., half a century later.

63. Even so strong a close as rhyme has not proved sufficient to prevent that running of one line into another, to which we have seen this measure to be peculiarly exposed (43) : a further remedy, therefore, was applied by the French,

namely, the closing the sense with the line, and which, indeed, the nature of rhyme, strictly followed, requires. But this has naturally given rise to that antithetic cast and epigrammatic point, which so much pervades French poetry. One hemistich is balanced in sense, as well as in measure, against another, sometimes giving out a variation of the sense, like the clauses of Hebrew poetry, and sometimes charged with a heap of epithets belonging to a noun which is contained in the former hemistich, or with an apposition of nouns governed by verbs in the former. So far the measure is not unsuitable to the rhetorical flourish and declamatory strain which distinguishes the French theatre: but for every other purpose, never was a measure so ill suited. It must, however, be allowed to have one great advantage in French verse which it has not in ours, and that is, the alternate mixture of masculine and feminine rhymes. This to a more certain degree prevents the confusion of one line with another.

64. When a line has been extended to a certain length, the mind and the breath are fain to make the principal *cæsura* as marked as the close. Hence the tendency of such measures to break into two. The limit at which this dismemberment takes place, depends on the character of the language. If its words be short, then, since the

quantity of sense to a line is limited, from the mind requiring a certain compass of meaning, no less than the ear of sound, its metrical lines will be shorter, and therefore will break sooner when stretched beyond the usual point. Thus in our tongue the words are like the stones in our buildings—small, and our structure of them breaks into small masses ; while in the Greek and Latin they are like their marble blocks, which allow of large masses. Hence not only do the pauses in our verses coincide too much with the end of the feet ; but also our longer measures cannot sustain themselves, but break asunder : and our Alexandrine now survives only in the lyric stanza of four lines and rhymes, such as occurs in Psalm cxlviii. 1 :

Ye boundless realms of joy,  
Exalt your Maker's fame :  
His praise your song employ,  
Above the starry frame.

But not the slightest tendency to such a breach is observable in the Greek trimeter ; and that sonorous tongue can sustain tetrameters where we have never even ventured, as in the trochaic and anapæstic ; or ventured in vain, as in the iambic, employed by Chapman.

65. Such a fact demonstrates that this measure has too lyrical a cast for our modern narrative

poetry. And yet, at the same time, it is too poor for lyrical poetry of a high order. We can only wonder at the taste which could endure any long continuation of it, whether used in its entire or broken form. Its marked cæsura and close make it more lyrical than the hexameter: the insignificance of its intermediate parts more prosaic than the trimeter. Hence its real character is that of mere ballad ; and we may dismiss it from any further consideration upon the staple measures of versification.

## CHAPTER IX.

## ON THE PAUSES OF THE HEROIC.

66. THE heroic line of ten iambic feet, borrowed by us through Chaucer, if through none earlier, from the French, appears to owe its origin to the Latin hendecasyllable. This is more discernible in the Italian form of it, which consists of eleven syllables, and freely admits the trochee ; as, for example, in the very first line of the "Jerusalem Delivered :"

*Cánto l'ármi pietósi e'l Cápítáno :*

the measure of which, according to the analogy of quantity, corresponds with

*Aridā modo pūmice ēxpolitum,*

of stress, with

*Déxtram stérnuit ápprobátiónum ;*

while the common run of the line is according to the stress in

*Ad coe'lum lépido vocáre vérsu.*

On coming into the hands of the French, it lost the last syllable in the masculine rhymes; and in this form, agreeably with the monosyllabic character of our language, was imported into English poetry, and, as early as the days of Chaucer, became its staple measure for epic and didactic subjects. It does indeed with us occasionally resume the double ending; but hardly ever, in the case of rhyme, unless a ludicrous effect be intended; as in

Which, now to sense, and now to nonsense leaning,  
Means not, but blunders round about a meaning.

Even without rhyme this is rare,—occurring but now and then in the “Paradise Lost,” as in

Of rebel angels, by whose aid aspiring

—except in dramatic poetry, which is principally distinguished from any other by its free use of it, and even prolonging it to another syllable, still so as to end the line with a dactyl, in the place of the long syllable. For example:

Of the imperial theme. I thank you, | gentlemen.  
My thought, whose murder yet is but fan|tastical.

*Macbeth*, i. 3.

Otway's lines abound in such terminations.



67. The number and frequency of the pauses in the course of a hundred lines is as follows:—

I. After 1st syllable, in Tasso, 19, in Milton, 21, in Dryden, 20							
II.	"	2nd	"	"	61	"	47
III.	"	3rd	"	"	28	"	36
IV.	"	4th	"	"	68	"	41
V.	"	5th	"	"	19	"	43
VI.	"	6th	"	"	72	"	41
VII.	"	7th	"	"	15	"	40
VIII.	"	8th	"	"	72	"	50
IX.	"	9th	"	"	20	"	30
Sum . . . . .					374	"	349

Hence the number of pauses is about seven in two lines. But taking it as high as four in a verse, we may then have 126 lines of different construction in succession; and thus the measure, on this score, admits of not much more than a third of the variety of the trimeter, nor than a thirtieth of that of the hexameter. How unfit must it thus be for translating out of the latter! We can hardly recognize the original poet under such a metamorphosis. Homer seems to us transformed from the old bard in flowing and embroidered robes, to the schoolboy in close jacket and trousers all dark grey: and we wonder what has become of the animation and variety which should distinguish the higher narrative poetry.

In order to adopt it to such a purpose, it must have these infused from some external source. Hence some epic poets, as Dante, Tasso, Spenser, have had recourse to stanzaic arrangement. How far they have overcome the difficulty, we shall see presently, when we proceed to compare the respective merits of the several measures according to the service to which they have been ordinarily applied.

68. We cannot but be struck on this view with the comparative equality of the recurrence of the pauses in our language, especially as employed by Milton. This arises from the monosyllabic nature of our language, which obliges us to resolve the line so much into its elementary feet, even down to syllables. Hence the cause of much monotony in our recitation; which is very sensible to a foreign ear, as it listens to the declamation of our actors. But we must do Milton the justice to note his more frequent usage of the trochaic pauses, in spite of the obstacles interposed by our monosyllabic language; while the Italian, with all his advantages, has appeared insensible to their value: so much so, that they are to the remainder hardly more than 1 : 3 in number; and that which gives the greatest briskness of all, occurring after the fifth syllable, he has employed nearly the least of all. Hence there is a heaviness

of roll in his lines, which, had he not it in common with Ariosto, we might have supposed to have been affected in imitation of what seemed to him a part of the gravity of Virgil; it little accords with the animation of epic narrative, of which we have such an example in Homer. Nor, indeed, has Dryden by any means approached Milton in this particular. Compare them at the fifth and seventh pauses. The harmony of Dryden comes out more from the comparison of two lines, than from the consideration of one.

69. The cæsuras are after the fourth and sixth syllable. But falling, as they do, at the end of feet, they produce no change of measure; but only make it more marked. Hence too exclusive an use of them imparts a staid and strong, but monotonous character to the versification. And, moreover, it becomes requisite that great care should be taken in the management of them, that two lines containing the same cæsura should not come together, since then they become confounded one with another, as in

This noble youth	to madness loved a dame
Of high degree,	Honoris was her name.

*Theodore and Honoria, 10.*

Adorn'd in ancient times	with arms and arts,
And rich inhabitants	with generous hearts.— <i>Id.</i> 3.

We have seen (43) how even Milton, the most

#### OF THE HEROIC.

careful constructor of verse, has fallen into this error. In Thomson, the most careless and ignorant of all, we may sometimes draw a line down through almost a page, marking off the former of these cæsuras in each line. And indeed so nearly does it, in its strength, resemble the end of a line, that in the dramatic poets we often find the same licence as occurs at the end of a line, namely, of a double termination ; as in "Macbeth," i. 6 :—

To plague the in|ventor. | This evenhanded justice.

But the stop is commonly full, as here. If not, we may refer it to the licence of the anapæst for the iambus (30).

These cæsuras divide the line in most harmonious proportions, those of 2 : 3, and 3 : 2. At the same time, the bisecting cæsura makes amends for its uniformity of division by the change of measure which ensues upon it, as in "Theodore and Honoria," i. :—

Of all the cities | in Romanian lands.

Thus this measure has rich resources of good harmony on this head, though they be not so various as in those which we have before reviewed.

70. When we come to the effect of the pauses on the measure, we are immediately struck with a strange contrast to ancient usage in the admission

of the trochee. This is a remnant of the old construction of the line, as we have already seen (66), and is admitted by the Italian into every foot but the last, and even two are allowed to stand together, as in the very first line of Tasso's epic. Milton, who was so deeply imbued with Italian poetry, and had a pedantic turn, accordingly admits it indiscriminately, as in "Paradise Lost:"—

Shoots invisible virtue e'en to the deep.—iii. 587.

In the visions of God. It was a hill.—xi. 377.

Thy lingering, or with one stroke of his dart.—*Id.*

The English construction of the line, however, commonly rejects the foot, except in the first place. Pope is fond of it here. It gives a brisk start to the verse, as in "Essay on Man," i. :—

Warms in the sun, refreshes in the breeze,  
Glow in the stars, and blossoms in the trees.

But there is commonly a pause, either in the first foot, as in the above lines, or after it, as in Dryden, "Palamon and Arcite:"—

Serious | in aspect, earnest in their talk.

Such a line as

Poverty | breaketh noble hearts in twain,

however common in dramatic poetry, will hardly be found in the school of Dryden and Pope.

Once admitted in the first place, it would gain admission into the places following the cæsuras (48), where however it seldom occurs except in older writers and dramatic poets.

71. Admitting the above licence, as also that of the double and triple termination, and that of trisyllabic feet in any part of the line, dramatic writers have formed a characteristic measure, differing from that of the heroic much in the same way as the comic trimeter differed from the tragic. It may be brought thus to the very verge of prose, as we may see from the arrangement of parts of "Spectator," No. 459 :—

For instance, in that disputable point,  
 Of persecuting men for conscience' sake,  
 Besides embittering their minds with hatred.  
 \* \* \* \* \*

Distress their fortunes, hurt their reputations,  
 Ruin their families, make their lives painful,  
 Or put an end to them. Sure when I see—  
 \* \* \* \* \*

I'd be as fully convinced o' th' truth of it  
 As of a mathematical demonstration.

It is to be regretted, therefore, that our comic poets should have composed in prose rather than in this loose metre. The difference of trouble to the author would have been slight, while that of literary value is incalculable. He would communicate an ideal cast, which never should be wanting, even

to the most familiar representation of human life, be it even the joke of a clown. At the same time also we lament to find how inferior is such a strain to that which the Greek comic metre breathes, maintaining the poetical and ideal cast of the tragic down to the lowest relaxation of its form. It can never fall into prose, nor can prose ever rise into it. But it maintains a character in exact harmony with its subject, and with nothing else. Indeed this measure of ours and the trimeter may be considered as no very inaccurate exponents of the nature of the two theatres, which is as different as the statues of Apollo and Silenus are from those of Newton and Sutor John. Such considerations only illustrate still more its defectiveness as a measure for heroic poetry, without borrowing help from such an extrinsical source as stanzaic arrangement. Its highest pitch should not carry it higher than moral poetry and conversation, beyond which even the trimeter did not aspire, except in the narratives of messengers in tragedy. But we are anticipating considerations which will be entered upon more at large presently.

## CHAPTER X.

## ON THE PAUSES OF THE VARIOUS TETRAMETERS

72. WE have seen that in proportion to the length of the line the cæsuras become more marked, until they obtain all the force of closes, and the line breaks into two (64). The Greek, therefore, polysyllabic though it was, and from that cause demanding much more room for a sentence than English, and therefore also a longer range of verse, never pushed its metre beyond eight feet, or even quite so far, but stopped within a syllable or half a foot of it, as in the tetrameters composed of the iambus, of the trochee, of the anapæst. So marked are the cæsuras in these, that it will be sufficient merely to quote examples in each :—

Ἐπίσχεῖς ἐν ταῖς ἀσπίσιν | λαβὴν γὰρ ἐνδίδωκας.

Equit. 844.

Ὡ βαθυζώνων ἀνασσα | Περσίδων ὑπερδάρη.

Pers. 158.

Λίγισθα βρόχους· ὥς τὰς σπονδάς | οὐ μὴ πρότερον παραβῶμεν.

Aves. 461.



The other pauses, though not all equally constant, are sufficiently obvious after all that has been already stated, and therefore nothing remains for remark but the fact of these cæsuras occurring after complete feet, so that the latter part of the line is an echo to the former, as we saw was the case in the Alexandrine (62). It is, however, inevitable, from the peculiar length of the line, which naturally breaks at those points. Nor can we find fault with it, but on the contrary we feel how admirably such a monotonous repetition suits the uses to which the Greeks commonly put those measures, namely, to carrying on scenes peculiarly occupied with tragic agitation or comic bustle, which would be much heightened by language so strongly marked in intonation. But it should be observed, that no whole poems, but only parts in subordination, are composed in these measures, if we except the earliest tragedy, of which however no remains exist. Nothing shows more than this the nice discrimination and exquisite taste of the Greeks, whose genius gradually formed a language so flexible in all its departments, as to vary and give the proper expression to every mode of thought, as to whole and to parts. They can construct a building, in which the kitchen shows without vulgarity that it is the kitchen, as much as the chapel shows with all solemnity that it is

the chapel. While our building, like too many specimens of modern Gothic, can distinguish neither; and, if it does not put a chimney to the chapel, puts a crocket to the kitchen. Pope's translation of the "Iliad" is an example, however extreme and partial, of this defect.

73. Some perhaps may think that these tetrameters are only such to the eye, and are in reality broken into two parts, so that two tetrameters in sequel would form a staff, just as in English, the second and fourth lines being shorter by a syllable than the first and third, as

ὦ βαθυζώνων ἄνασσα,  
Περσίδων ὑπερτάτη,  
Μῆτερ ἢ Ξέρξου γεραία,  
Χαῖρε Δαρείου γύναι.

It must be confessed that the cæsura is so strong and constant in them all that we could not distinguish it from a close, and must have allowed of such a disposition of lines, if tetrameters had always occurred in an even number, so as to produce pairs, and the sense had almost always terminated with the end of each pair. But as this is far from being the case, there could have been no such stanzaic arrangement, and the lessons of the grammarians, which tell us that such tetrameters were whole verses to the ear as much as they are in print to our eyes, must be accepted.

74. But if with us the trimeter broke down, as we have already seen (64), how much more the tetrameter. Indeed the only species that was ever attempted is the iambic, which Chapman employed in his translation of Homer, and often with much felicity, since it is a measure in more apt correspondence with the length of the hexameter, and moves with a sufficiently imposing roll. But its exceeding monotony was a vital objection to its use in a poem of any length, nor has it been able to stand its ground entire since his time. It is now to be found but in its broken state in hymns and songs, the latter of which, from the double termination, are commonly of a ridiculous nature, and therefore also the former are rare, and require very cautious handling. Every one remembers

Great God ! what do mine eyes behold ?  
The end of things created !  
The Judge of mankind doth appear  
On clouds of glory seated.

The trochaic in its broken form is familiar to every one in some of our very best sea songs, as "Cease, rude Boreas," and "As near Porto Bello."

The anapæstic tetrameter is not found in our poetry. Indeed the ancient anapæstic measures are, according to our recitation, purely dactylic. We have, therefore, no real sense of the substitution of the dactyl for the anapæst, and such

anapæstic measures as we do admit must consist entirely of anapæsts. Hence the metre is of far too jumping a nature, as well as too difficult of construction, not to say that the length of the lines, when even thus broken, exceeds the limits of our language. What could we make of a series of such stanzas as this?—

O, ye woods, spread your branches apace to my flight,  
To your deepest recesses I throw me.  
I would share with the beasts of the chase in your night;  
would hide from all eyes that could know me.

75. Such is the great importance of the pause in verse. It does for it that which breaks and projections do for the face of a building: and as a short façade requires but short and shallow breaks, but a long one longer and deeper, until after a certain length these assume the nature of separate though dependent buildings,—so is it with the various lengths of verse and their pauses. So far, however, we have before us only the main outlines of the harmony of the structure, the portico, the wings, and the like; we have yet to examine the minuter portions, the pilasters, panels, and other arrangements of the stones. These are not, indeed, necessary to the harmony of the structure, and therefore may be, and often are, absent; but they contribute much to the filling up of that harmony, and satisfying the eye when

it comes up to examine that which recommended itself at a distance. When the eye is confined within one of those divisions, it will not be content with blank space, but must still have some lines, dimensions, and proportions to contemplate, be it but the junctures of the stones, or even of the bricks, as we must say in application to the words in our tongue, so short and plain as they are : therefore, as in verse each distinct word lies between pauses, we come now to examine the character of the word itself, as it is concerned with recitation, and so we proceed to discuss such properties of syllables as contribute to the effect of verse.

## CHAPTER XI.

ON THE EXPRESSION DUE TO THE ARTICULATION OF  
SYLLABLES.

76. CONSIDERED under this head, syllables are of two classes :—

(1) When nothing follows the vowel, as in *O*, *to*, *mu-sic*. It is then called pure, or vocal.

(2) When a consonant follows attached to the vowel, as in *at*, *that*, *rude-ness*, *mus-ter*. It is then called mixed, or consonantal.

In the first of these cases, the accent, raising but the key, does not affect the quantity, as in *á-tomus*<sup>1</sup>: but the stress, by dwelling on the syllable, necessarily lengthens it, as in *mā-teor*.

In the second, the accent is equally ineffective: but the stress, including now the consonant also, dwells less on the vowel, and therefore its sound is not so full and long as before; and the syllable is less sweet, though prolonged. Thus there is an

<sup>1</sup> We pronounce our word as *at-om*, not as *a-tom*.

increase of length, but also of closeness, and deficiency of fulness and sweetness in the progression, *gray, grace, grac'd*, or *gray, graze, graz'd* (9).

This second class admits of subdivisions:—

(1) When the attached consonant is a liquid, still more if it be compounded of one liquid followed by another, as in *Arma, Arncliffe*; or by a labial, as in *Arva, Alban*, or even by a dental, *Alabanda, Namancos*: then the sound is full of majesty or sweetness, according to the nature of the vowel, as in *Caernarvon*.

(2) If that consonant be a dental, and still more, a compound of two dentals, or of dental and guttural, as in *haste, Atkinson*, then the sound is always close, and often harsh. This latter character prevails through the Teutonic tongues, the former through the Celtic, as appears at once from comparing the names of places in England and Germany, with those in Wales, Ireland, and the Highlands, or even two names of one mountain, *Saddleback, Blencathro*.

(3) When the vowel is short, then the consonant, instead of being nearly absorbed in the long vowel, makes itself so sensible as to diminish much the sweetness. Compare *great* and *regret*. Much, of course, depends here also on the nature of the consonant, which in the Teutonic tongues is too often a dental or a guttural.

77. Before going into further particulars, it will be necessary to mark the degrees of these sounds. These are given in the following table, which shows at the same time the comparative prevalence of each in the Greek, Latin, and English. It should be observed, that our *w* and *y* here go for consonants ; and the nearest sounds are put for the same, where these do not occur.

## I. LONG.

1. <i>a</i> or <i>α</i> in <i>fall</i> . . .	{	Greek, —. Latin, —. English, 28.
2. <i>a</i> or <i>α</i> in <i>father</i> . .	{	Greek, 67. Latin, 125. English, 9.
3. <i>e</i> or <i>α</i> in <i>fate</i> . . .	{	Greek, 137. Latin, 147. English, 47.
4. <i>i</i> or <i>e</i> in <i>feed</i> . . .	{	Greek, 22. Latin, 108. English, 74.
5. <i>o</i> in <i>four</i> . . . .	{	Greek, 89. Latin, 67. English, 41.
6. <i>u</i> or <i>oo</i> in <i>food</i> . . .	{	Greek, 35. Latin, 85. English, 18.



## II. SHORT.

- |   |   |               |
|---|---|---------------|
| 7. $\overset{\circ}{a}$ or $\overset{\circ}{o}$ in <i>folly</i> . . . | { | Greek, —.     |
|   |   | Latin, —.     |
|   |   | English, 84.  |
| 8. $\overset{\circ}{a}$ or $\overset{\circ}{a}$ in <i>fat</i> . . .   | { | Greek, 124.   |
|   |   | Latin, 58.    |
|   |   | English, 128. |
| 9. $\overset{\circ}{e}$ or $\overset{\circ}{e}$ in <i>fret</i> . . .  | { | Greek, 156.   |
|   |   | Latin, 129.   |
|   |   | English, 71.  |
| 10. $\overset{\circ}{i}$ or $\overset{\circ}{i}$ in <i>fit</i> . . .  | { | Greek, 75.    |
|   |   | Latin, 159.   |
|   |   | English, 241. |
| 11. $\overset{\circ}{o}$ . . . . .                                    | { | Greek, 78.    |
|   |   | Latin, 38.    |
|   |   | English, —.   |
| 12. $\overset{\circ}{u}$ or $\overset{\circ}{u}$ in <i>full</i> . . . | { | Greek, 11.    |
|   |   | Latin, 49.    |
|   |   | English, 58.  |
| 13. $\overset{\circ}{u}$ in <i>fun</i> . . . . .                      | { | Greek, —.     |
|   |   | Latin, —.     |
|   |   | English, 116. |

## III. DIPHTHONGS.

- |   |   |             |
|---|---|-------------|
| 14. <i>au</i> , as in <i>town</i> pronounced in the North . . . . . | { | Greek, 13.  |
|   |   | Latin, 3.   |
|   |   | English, —. |
| 15. <i>eu</i> as in <i>mute</i> . . .                               | { | Greek, 9.   |
|   |   | Latin, —.   |
|   |   | English, 1. |

16. <i>ei</i> or <i>i</i> , as in <i>mine</i> , made up of 13 and 10 . . . . .	{	Greek, 46. Latin, —. English, 75.
17. <i>ai</i> , as in <i>thine</i> pro- nounced in the North . . . . .	{	Greek, 52. Latin, 33. English, —
18. <i>oi</i> , as in <i>foil</i> . . . .	{	Greek, 33. Latin, —. English, 5.
19. <i>ou</i> , as in <i>cow</i> . . . .	{	Greek, 55. Latin, —. English, 10.

The whole sum in each tongue is taken at 1000.

78. Hence we deduce these conclusions :—

Remarking that as the Greek is Attic, in Homer the short syllable will be much more frequent, perhaps as 900 : 700 in Virgil.

The number of long syllables being taken at 1000, then the number of short will be—in Greek 800, in Latin 762, in English 2303 : which shows at first sight the vast inferiority of our language to the classic, inundated as it is with such an immense disproportion of short syllables. This is much owing, not to the native fount of our language, but to the introduction of Latin words ; such as *impossible*, *opposition*, and the like.

79. We may divide the above list of sounds into three classes :

(1) The full and hard, comprehending Nos. 1, 2.  
5. 14. 17, 18, 19.

(2) The full and sweet, comprehending Nos. 3,  
4. 6. 15, 16.

(3) The close and slender, comprehending the  
short vowels.

Then the recurrences of these in the above  
languages will be,—

In Class (1) in Greek, 309, in Latin, 228, in English, 103

(2) „ 249 „ 340 „ 209

(3) „ 444 „ 433 „ 698

And thus we see at once the superior sonorousness of the Greek, the *os rotundum*, and the indistinct thinness of the English; among the sounds of which also, as peculiar to it, comes that numbered 13, which is more a grunt than a vowel. Its great prevalence is owing to its very common substitution for almost all short vowels in the unaccented syllables; as, for instance, in *temptation*, and all terminations in *ion*. A careless pronunciation will introduce it more frequently than necessary, and a vulgar will seek it, as in *trinutty*, *anjuls*, *baptizum*, &c. Nothing shows so much a well-educated ear as avoiding this sound as much as possible without pedantry.

80. The intermixture of these various classes of sounds, by adaptation to the sense, by repetition

immediate, or at intervals, supplies that detail of ornament which fills up the spaces left between the pauses (75). Of course the Greek and Latin poets have made great use of them, as also have the Italian, whose language is so favourable to them. Compare Virgil's

*Gramina. Nonne vides, croceos ut Tmolus odores.  
Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum,*

and Petrarch's

*Quando io movo i sospiri a chiamar voi  
E l'onda, che Cariddi assorbe e mesce.*

See the strong effect of the consonantal syllables in the latter of each of these.

The effect is of course greatest when the syllable is marked by the close neighbourhood of a cæsure. Thus in that line

*Fortunam Priami cantābo | et nobile bellum,*

the opening of the mouth for the broad *a* just before a principal pause, gives the *tantus hiatus* ridiculed by the poet.

Again, see the quietness produced by the thin and close sounds in

*Dic mihi, Musa, virum captæ post tempore Trojæ,*

especially at the cæsure.

Ancient poetry is so rich in well-known examples of this application, that it would be superfluous to quote them.

81. Deficient as the English is in richness and variety of sound, such as it has is set forth in the stronger contrast, and the others have more difficulty in finding the close and rugged than we the full and soft. It must indeed be confessed, that if we drew from all the compass of our language, we could never express the two or three short blasts followed by the full outpouring burst of the trumpet, which is suggested in such liveliness by that line—

*Tum tuba terribilem sonitum procul ære canoro ;*

and that ineffective indeed is the struggle of Fairfax, the only master of our language among all the translators of Tasso, to convey the imitative expression of his original in the celebrated lines, *Jerus. Lib. iv. 3* :—

*Chiama l'abitator dell' ombre eterne  
Il rauco suon della Tartarea tromba.  
Tremar le spaziose atre caverne,  
E l'aer cieco a quel rumor rimbomba.*

*The dreary trumpet blew a dreadful blast,  
And rumbled thro' the lands and kingdoms under :  
Through wasteness wide it roar'd, and hollows vast,  
And fill'd the deep with horror, fear, and wonder.*

Although he has contrived, in some degree, to express the distinction between the sharp blast conveyed by the sound *a*, and the hollow echo from the deep, signified by the sounds *o* and *u*, and their accompanying consonants.

Still none can be insensible to Milton's skill in contrasting the proper sounds in the following descriptions of the opening of the gates of heaven and hell, from the sixth and second books,

Heav'n opened wide  
Her ever-during gates, harmonious sound,  
On golden hinges moving.

On a sudden open fly  
With impetuous recoil, and jarring sound,  
The infernal doors, and on their hinges grate  
Harsh thunder.

Where the preference of *ever-during* to *everlasting* seems owing not only to more poetical form, but sweeter sound. The contrast of the vocal sounds in the first, with the consonantal in the second, is very effective.

The same poet supplies innumerable examples, as again in

Nor on the shaggy top of Mona high,  
Nor yet where Deva winds her wizzard stream.

And contrast the pomp of

Looks toward Namancos, and Bayona's hold,

with the simplicity of

Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken lies ;

and

Pour'd forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain,

with

The vassals of his anger, when the scourge ;

and

Hung high with diamond flaming and with gold,

with

Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw.

Gray, who was among the revivers of attention to our old school, comes next perhaps to Milton in the skilful arrangement of his sounds. The art had become quite forgotten by his time, if we may judge from the gross ignorance shown by Johnson in his criticism on Pope's famous imitative lines.

82. So much for the irregular, though designed mixture of syllabic sounds. But they occur also at regulated intervals, the same articulation or sound being repeated, and forming thus a secondary ornament in detail, answering to the primary and necessary parts of the structure of verse.

## CHAPTER XII.

## ON ALLITERATION.

83. ALLITERATION means the agreement of syllables in their component letters. According to this definition of it, Rhyme is included in it. It is however commonly restricted to the agreement of the consonants of the syllable, and more commonly still to the agreement of merely the initial consonant. But we are obliged to recur to the full and original sense when we speak of it, when adopted as an essential part of versification, as it has been by the modern Welsh, for their most ancient poetry has no such base. The language may have led to it by its singular structure, abounding as it does in similar clusters of letters; and their later bards riveted its dominion through the usual desire of substituting difficulty of mechanical execution from poverty of design and scantiness of thought. The following is an example of



the construction of one of their most popular measures.

*See greedy wolves agreed for spoil—delay*  
*But daily whets their toil.*  
*Lord thou ordainest, and wilt foil*  
*With terror all their wild turmoil.*

Poverty of sense in this specimen will be readily excused by such as reflect on the extreme difficulty of the attempt in the English, which is as contrary as possible to the genius of the Welsh in this matter, and that even that tongue cannot go on far without some sacrifice of sense to sound.

84. The definition already given of versification excludes it utterly as a basis (2. 6). And if that argument *à priori* were not sufficient, this *à posteriori* would be ample. For surely nothing can be more undignified and inconsistent. Where there is no stress, the effect of such repetition of sound is weak and trifling. Where there is stress, then it becomes as much too strong, as it was before weak, and the result is an intolerable monotony, and annoying clink.

85. But one that is unfit for regular service may be very advantageously employed in conducting its lower details, by the irregular operation to which, from their accidental nature, they must be subjected. And such has been the service to which poets of all times and tongues have put

alliteration. The perception of it is of course most lively (1) when it marks the beginning of a word ; (2) the accented syllable in a word ; (3) the commencement of a foot. We have all these three cases in the line

*Sed neque meDorum Silvæ DiTiSeima Tellus.*

It adds much to the force of expression in those numerous cases where the notion of repetition is involved. Of these we will mark a few for examples.

(1) The first is where the repetition is obviously in the thing itself, as in Ennius's imitation of the note of the trumpet :—

*At Tuba Terribili sonitu TaraTanTara dixit.*

(2) Haste commonly presents the idea of a quickly repeated action. Hence Virgil writes,

*Quo Maxima Motu  
Terra Tremat, Fugere Feræ.*

(3) Joy, sorrow, contempt, are expressed by the repetition of the interjections belonging to them, as “ha! ha!—ah! ah!—pooh! pooh!” hence the playfulness of the cattle is expressed by Lucretius in the line,

*Inde feræ Pecudes Persultant Pabula læta ;*

the monotonous iteration of melancholy by Tasso  
in

*Il Pietoso Pastor Pianse al suo Pianto ;*

and the sneering of contempt by Sophocles in

*Τυφλὸς Τά τ' ὤτα Τὸν Τε νοῦν Τά Τ' ὄμμαΤ' εἰ.*

(4) Peculiar impressiveness is also conveyed by the same means, as we see in the example of so many of our proverbs, as “Neck or nothing.” Hence Virgil gives the solemn warning of Anchises in the line

*Neu patriæ Validas in Viscera Vertite Vires.*

That it should serve on such different, and even contrasted occasions, will surprise no one. The tick of a clock and the prolonged ring of a sheep-bell give a like repetition, but with how different an effect on the mind ! And even the same note repeated under different circumstances will give birth to very different feelings. How merry is the chirp of the sparrow in the stackyard, how irksome in the centre of a smoky town.

Another use to which Virgil is especially fond of applying it, is to show the connexion of the several parts of the line, and brace together to the mind the portions which the pauses have separated to the voice. Thus at the same time the pauses become much more marked and effective. Indeed

the very idea of connexion seems conveyed in the line

**M**Ens AgitAt **M**OLEm et **M**Agno sE cOrpOrE MiscEt.

How elaborately simple is the opening of the *Georgics* :—

Quid faciat lætas Segetes, quo Sidere terram  
Vertere, Mæcenas, ulmisque adjungere Vites  
Conveniat, quæ Cura bouum, qui Cultus habendo  
Sit Pecori ; aPibus quanta exPerientia Parcis ;  
Hinc Canere inCipiam.

It is very common with Virgil to have at least two alliterating words in a line ; and when he would give the finishing stroke to an elaborate passage, he commonly does it by a line marked peculiarly thus. What magnificent runs (so to say) are closed by the following lines :—

**R**omanOS ad **T**empla Deûm **D**uxere **T**riumphOS.—*Georg.* ii. 148.

**E**t **S**eptemgemiNI **T**urbant **T**repidi oSTia **N**III.—*Æn.* vi. 801.

So little did this master of expression slight this auxiliary, which has been treated so cavalierly by modern critics. Indeed sometimes it is not easy to assign his reasons for such excessive use of it, as in

**E**t quæ **M**ar**M**OReO fert **M**ONstra sub æquORe pONTus.

*Æn.* vi. 729.

**C**orPORes **E**xCEDunt **P**ESTES ; **P**ENitusque **N**ECESse Est.

*Æn.* vi. 737.

Our poet Gray, who, next to Milton, had the finest ear, has similarly employed it, as in the line "Ruin seize thee, Ruthless King." Johnson, with his usual ignorance, has condemned him for it. It has, without doubt, been abused. But the very abuse proves its use in moderation. Nor should we judge of its general effect from our own language, which is so tough and harsh from its quantity of monosyllables.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## ON RHYME.

86. RHYME, in its original form Rhythm, means proportion, and among other kinds Metrical, in which sense alone it occurs in the modern tongues which have borrowed the word. But as in these tongues the great distinction of one verse from another is formed by the identity of the terminating sound, it came to be applied as the term for this identity, and from familiar use assumed the more familiar form of rhyme. Not that the whole syllables which have the same rhyme are identical. For the initial consonant is left indifferent. It would be a work of insuperable difficulty, as well as an effect most barbarous, to include that also, and make *reclaim* answer to *declaim*.

87. As an auxiliary, it has been adopted in the earliest poetry with which we are acquainted, in that of Homer, and runs through all classical poetry to the last. Its use is to give strength to

cæsuras, which are made to rhyme with the end of the line. Most commonly the termination of the substantive rhymes with that of its adjective, whose relation thus becomes pointedly marked. Who is not familiar with such examples as

Ἐκ μὲν Κρητῶν | γένος εὐχομαι εὐρεῖσθαι.—*Odyss.* ζ'. 199.

Ter centum nivei | tondent dumeta juveni,  
Nitor, et indicio | prodor ab ipse meo.  
Illum indignanti | similem, similemque minanti.

88. Those who censure rhyme as a modern barbarism do not seem to have considered this use, nor that it would be exceedingly barbarous in our own versification in that very place where it is such a favourite with the ancients ; for who could endure such a line as

The blushing rose | her dewy flower shall close ?

for our rhymed verse has rhyme enough already, and the whole couplet would be thrown into confusion. And our blank verse rejects every thing of the kind on principle.

89. That line

Illum indignanti similem, similemque minanti,

is the very model of the Leonine or monkish verses, and gives us the key to the origin of modern rhyme. For when in the decay of the Latin the sense of quantity had been lost, and the musical

accent given way to mere stress, the hexameter lost all its ancient music, and could well bear some addition to its harmony. At the same time the ear had become dull to the variety of its pauses, and the very marked *cæsura* in the middle of the third foot was the only one to which it was fully sensible, and which therefore it always required. But at this very point also came the ancient rhyme. What could be a more natural resource for patching up the ruined harmony than this, and where could they have found a better if they had purposely looked beyond this which was at hand? When therefore the vernacular tongues began to employ versification, how could it be otherwise, decayed Latin as they were, than that they should have recourse to rhyme, feeling as they must the want of some additional prop to their feeble measure. The argument is much strengthened when we find, from specimens of the Anglo-Saxon, that it was unlikely to have been derived from the Teutonic stock.

90. The capability of languages for rhyme is of course very different; being in proportion to their analogical structure and abundance of inflections. Hence the Greek surpasses all on this point. It abounds with words of similar sound, as *δρῖπτω*, *θρύπτω*, *κύπτω*, *τύπτω*;—of similar derivation, as *θρέμμα*, *πέμμα*, *στέμμα*, *στρέμμα*;—with large classes



of various terminations of substantives, as *ημα, ωμα, ησις, ωσις, ισμα, ισις, &c.*,—of adjectives, as *ηρης, ηρος, ερος, ινος, ωδης, ηλος, &c.*: to say nothing of the inexhaustible resources arising from persons, tenses, and cases. Even the modern Greek, shorn though it be of so much of this richness, is still by far the best furnished of all our European tongues with the means of rhyme.

91. As in every respect, so in this the Latin is inferior to Greek. Being far less homogeneous in its structure, it has not such well-filled classes of various inflection, and so much echo resounding from an analogical structure. Still it is richer than all its daughters; which, if they have laid open a wider field to a given number of rhymes, by reducing many inflections to one, have lost variety in proportion. Thus, where the Latin had *terror, terroris, terrorem, terrori, terrore*; the Italian has but *terrore*: and, therefore, with five times as many words to one rhyme (which it does not need), it has but one-fifth of the variety which it does need. The same may be said of the Spanish and of the French, which last is the poorest of the Latin dialects on this point; while, through its monosyllabic inflexions, it departs widely from their scope of variety, which admits of choice between the fulness of the double, and the firmness of the single, rhyme.

92. Unquestionably the poorest of all the tongues of modern literature, on this head, is the English; not only from its very compound nature, which is so unfavourable to analogical structure, and to rich variety of inflexion; and from its monosyllabic terminations: but also, and principally, from the natural position of its accent, which can hardly ever fall upon a termination. For example, while the Italian can match *orrore* with *terrore*, and the French, *vicieux* with *melodieux*; the English cannot put *horror* to rhyme with *terror*, nor *vicious* with *melodious*; and these terminations, which we have so largely introduced from the French, and are to that tongue so fruitful a resource for rhyme, are to us quite barren. Not, however, that they were such at the time of their introduction; for they seem to have brought with them the native seat of their stress. Thus, in the opening of the "Canterbury Tales," we find among the rhymes of the first two hundred lines, *liquór*, *reasón*, *gippón*, *voyàge*, *visàge*, *bracér*, *manére*, *consciéce*, *Bennét*, *laboúr*. But they were in time compelled to conform to the genius of their adopting language, which likes to throw the stress upon the radical part of the word, and is especially averse to its place on the last syllable. Hence our rhymes are driven to the scanty resource of primitives and radicals: and while the Italian and Frenchman, having

ended his verse with an infinitive or participle, has the choice of a thousand more such for a rhyme to it, the Englishman must often go through his alphabet, and often congratulate himself, that, amid the identical sounds thus studiously suggested, there does occur one which is contained in a word suitable to the sense required. The extreme difficulty of the case will appear from another consideration. We have seen, that in the whole compass of the language, the recurrence of the long syllable is to that of the short but as 10 : 23 (78) ; but in rhymes, it is as 34 : 10, or nearly 70 : 23 : to such a degree must the nature of the language be forced to supply them.

93. But hence also arises a great advantage to the English. For it is reasonable that the close of a verse should not be the least emphatic part of it, but just the contrary. But this defect of emphasis is the case with both Greek and Latin, and their children where rhyme is used, since that commonly falls upon mere inflexions. No wonder that it should produce a mere tinkle in ears accustomed to classical versification. But with us, where it is single (as it almost invariably is, except when a ludicrous or trifling effect is intended) it can never fall on a syllable more weak and insignificant than the rest. Hence, with us rhyme assumes a much more dignified

position, and derives additional strength and beauty from the very difficulty of its production. And this cause, added to the strictness of our rhythm, allows us to be satisfied with it even when imperfect, and within certain bounds to enjoy the imperfection for its agreeable variety. In the two most perfect specimens of our rhymed couplet, Pope's "Rape of the Lock," and Parnell's "Hermit," one rhyme in twelve is imperfect. In a significant thing we can endure inexactness, for we are not always inclined or able to appreciate the fulness of its significance. But an insignificant thing is comprehended at first sight, and must be perfect to be endurable. Voltaire well remarked that rhyme was a master to the French, but a slave to the English.

94. Thus rhyme in English goes on quite a different footing from that which it mainly holds in the Latin dialects. A word is echoed by a word, and not a termination by a termination. In the former case, the same sound conveys another sense, and thus brings also a pleasing sense of variety, often of analogy, to the mind, which finds itself transported by it to another region of thought. In the latter, there is a mere repetition of senseless sound, and the mind finds itself simply in the same part of the accident. An example will make these remarks clear:—

Il est certains esprits, dont les sombres pensées,  
 Sont d'un image épais toujours embarrassées ;  
 Le jour de la raison ne la sauroit percer.  
 Avant donc que d'écrire apprenez à penser.  
 Selon que notre idée est plus ou moins obscure  
 L'expression la suit, ou moins nette, ou plus pure.  
 Ce que l'on conçoit bien s'énonce clairement,  
 Et les mots pour le dire arrivent aisément.  
 Sur tout qu'en vos écrits la langue reverée  
 Dans vos plus grands excès vous soit toujours sacrée.  
 En vain vous me frappez d'un son mélodieux,  
 Si le terme est impropre, ou le tour vicieux.

Boileau, *l'Art Poétique*, i.

Così pugnato fu, sinchè l'albore  
 Rosseggiando nel ciel già n'apparia.  
 Ma poi chè scosso fu il notturno orrore,  
 Che l'orror delle morti in se copia,  
 La desiata luce a noi terrore  
 Con vista accrebbe dolorosa e ria ;  
 Che pien d'estinti il campo, et quasi tutta  
 Nostra gente vedemmo ormai distrutta.

*Gerusalemme Lib.*, viii. 20.

Now sank the sun. The closing hour of day  
 Came onward, mantled o'er with sober grey.  
 Nature in silence bade the world repose ;  
 When near the road a stately palace rose.  
 There by the moon through ranks of trees they pass,  
 Whose verdure crown'd their sloping sides of grass.  
 It chanced the noble master of the dome  
 Still made his house the wandering stranger's home ;  
 Yet still the kindness, from a thirst of praise,  
 Proved the vain flourish of expensive ease.  
 The pair arrive : the liveried servants wait :  
 Their lord receives them at the pompous gate.  
 The table groans with costly piles of food,  
 And all is more than hospitably good.

Then led to rest the day's long toil they drown,  
 Deep sunk in sleep, and silk, and heaps of down.

*Parnell's Hermit, 44.*

95. So very strongly marked as it is, rhyme becomes a mere tinkling, and loses all dignity either if the return occur too soon, or if it be marked with a distinctness too elaborate. The short verses of Skelton, such as,

Thus I, Colin Clout,  
 As I go about,  
 And wondering as I walk,  
 I hear the people talk,

are an example of the first case. Nor is sufficient solemnity for sustaining serious narrative obtained until we come to the heroic couplet. And even here the effect is not majestic enough for the march of epic poetry, as every one must feel on reading the translations of Dryden and Pope. Spenser, therefore, did well in introducing from the Italian the alternations of the stanzaic construction. As to the second case of too studied a rhyme, its light and commonly ludicrous effect appears in the triple endings of the Italian, and in the double endings of our lines, as in,

Who now to sense, and now to nonsense leaning,  
 Means not, but blunders round about a meaning.

Perhaps a better specimen could not be found than these lines of Fairfax :—

While thus he spake, Erminia, hush'd and still,  
His wise discourses heard with great attention ;  
His speeches grave those idle fancies kill  
Which in her troubled mind had such dissension.  
After much thought reformed was her will ;  
Within those woods to dwell was her intention,—  
*The Recovery of Jerusalem, vii. 14.*

where the reader will not fail to remark also the very bad effect of the rhyme falling on the same termination in our tongue. It does not seem to us a rhyme, but a mere repetition.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## ON THE MODERN RECITATION OF ANCIENT VERSE.

96. THAT we enjoy a perception of great harmony when we recite the ancient measures is indisputable; as also that such harmony very much surpasses any that we can derive from all the stores of modern versification. And yet we must derive it from a source quite other than the original and true, which was the proportion of quantity. For let any one try to recite (if he can) a line, strictly according to its long and short syllables: he will find in it rather the reverse of what he has been accustomed to consider as harmony, and at least his attention will be diverted from the pauses. Let him again make the nearest approach to quantity that stress can give, by laying it on all the long syllables. This has no foundation in the position of accent or quantity, and the result is nothing but the intolerable jingle, which reminds him of his days of scanning schoolboyhood. And here, again, he has no pro-



per perception of the pauses. Let him, lastly, substitute stress for the Latin accent, and recite accordingly in the usual way. He finds a most agreeable harmony, and is delighted with the rich variety of the pauses. And all is seemingly as unaccountable as agreeable ; for all the rules of quantity have been quite overturned, and even directly contradicted. Iambuses and spondees are turned into trochees, as in *nóvis, cáusam* ; tribrachs, anapeests, and cretics into dactyls, as in *fúciat, sēgetes, cándidos*. And two dissyllabic words in sequence, as *Témpla Déum, Déum Témpla, saévæ fēvæ, álta júga*, &c., compose what feet they will according to quantity, are to us all double trochees ; and two trisyllabic will either form the double dactyl, as in *sēgetes ápibus, mŭrmurant latices* ; or a combination of the amphibrach and dactyl, as in *habéndo pēcori*. Hence it comes to pass that our modern recitation conveys no analogous notion of any ancient Latin measure, except of the trochaic quite pure, of the dactylic quite pure, and of the latter only in those cases where the foot is contained in a word, or in the combination of the trochee and amphibrach, represented in *cŭltus habéndo*. But one real dactyl can stress substituted for accent bring out of the wholly dactylic hexameter,

Quadrupedánte pēdum sŏnitu quátit úngula cámpum.

Even as to our sense of the iambic measures, which are most congenial of all with our notions of harmony, forming as they do the staple of our own versification, we are continually at fault owing to the nature of the Latin accent, which will not allow a dissyllable to be an iambus, but makes it a trochee. Hence a multitude of lines are to us scazons, and we even go so far as to end a trimeter with three trochees; thus in Horace, Epod. xvii. 37; xviii. 17.

Effáre, jússas cum fide poénas lúam.  
In mónte sáxum. Sed vétant léges Jóvis.

If we open Horace at the first Ode, we shall find that we make the trochaic movement in "Naúta sécet máre," equivalent to the dactylic in "Édite régibus;" again, in "Láudat rúra súi," to the iambic in "Myrtóum pávidus; also, the iambic movement "Mæcénas átavís," to be responded to by the trochaic "Evitáta rótis:" and in general the dactyl in quantity may be in accent an amphibrach, as in *convéníat*, or a cretic, as in *fúdit æquum*; and thus suit the iambic or trochaic measures instead of the dactylic.

However, therefore, we must learn to compose the ancient measures according to the ancient prosody, yet we must have recourse to a very different principle in considering the rules of the

modern recitation of them. This seems hardly to have been discussed, and assuredly never has been ascertained.

97. Of course, the basis of it, which is the stress laid on the seats of the Latin accent, must be one which lies at the foundation of the prevailing rhythm of our modern tongues. And this as we have already seen (15), is the iambic measure. For example, according to our pronunciation, the Sapphic,

*Arte matræna rápidos morantes*

is a good dramatic line, running as,

*Questions important ágitate débâters*

with the common licence of the trochee in the first place. But it will also supply in its first three feet and half as many to the commencement of an accentuated hexameter, as in,

*Arte matræna rápidos | per saxa morantem ;*

or of a trimeter, such as in Hor. Epod. vii. 5,

*Nón ut supérbas ínvidæ | Cartháginis.*

And the very dactylic cast of the line,

*Convéniat quæ cúra bóum quí | cultus habendo,*

can be represented exactly in its first four feet, by our heroic, as in,

*Convénience, which éver órders, ís | always directing.*

And, again, that of

Liber et álma Céres, véstro sí | númine téllus,

by

Bácchus and jóyous Céres únder your | óffices kindly.

In many cases also the trimeter, by the simple addition of the one syllable which is wanting to make it equal in the number of syllables to the hexameter, which has but the one dactyl, becomes an hexameter. Of the thirty-three trimeters which enter into Horace's sixteenth Epode, seven thus become hexameters, namely, verses 2, 4, 10, 20, 48, 52, 60. Thus,

Néque impudíca Cólchis (huc) íntulít pédem,

is as to accent as perfect an hexameter as

Námque indeféssos ártus non ópprimit acéas.

98. The iambic then seems to be at the foundation of all the harmony which we can make out of the chief ancient measures according to our recitation, except in the case, of course, of the trochaic; which, however, as we have seen, we mix most strangely with the iambic, so as to go quite contrary to the rule of quantity, which sets these two measures in as opposite directions as possible. This mixture it will be necessary to

bear in mind continually, in laying down the rules of recitation for certain measures. How we not only tolerate it, but indulge in it, were unaccountable, if we did not consider the peculiar nature of stress, indefinite as it is in comparison with accent or quantity. It is in fact merely accidental to them. We may pronounce one syllable in twice the time that we do another, or two or three higher in the scale than we do another, either in a louder or a softer tone, and either as to all or to any particular syllables, and yet not essentially disturb the proper proportions, though it may require some slight care not so to do. And while such proportions are so fixed, stress admits of none. One sound is louder to us than another, but we never can distinctly perceive it to be so in any proportion. We cannot fix our loudest notes at a given height above our common tone. Hence, as we have seen formerly (16), there may be numberless degrees of stress, and we may overcome a lower stress by a higher one. Thus, in beginning an hexameter with "*fóns érat*," we do not neglect the stress on *erat*, but we ignore it (so to say) by a more forcible one on *fóns*. Thus we can account for such lines as

By fówl, fish, béast, was flown, was swum, was walk'd.

*Par. Lost*, vii.

Béast, bird, fish, insect, what no eye can see.

*Essay on Man*, i.

Amid such indefiniteness it is most easy to lose our reckoning, and take our start as it were from the louder tap, and so turn the iambic movement into trochaic, or to end with the loud tap, and turn the trochaic into iambic. However it be as to cause, the effect is certain, as we have seen in the examples above given.

99. It must never be forgotten that our recitation of the two ancient languages goes entirely by the rules of the Latin accent. Those of the Greek are utterly unattended to. Thus we pronounce *ἡμέρα, θνητός, ἐπιβλέπων*, as if they had been accentuated as *ἡμερα, θνήτος, ἐπίβλεπων*, according to the Latin rule. Hence we have not the slightest sense of Greek recitation in any way whatever, and in pronouncing Homer's verse as we do, we translate him into our pronunciation of Virgil's. Indeed, it were impossible by any substitution of stress in place of the Greek accent, to arrive at the slightest analogy of the construction of the hexameter, of which we think that we have some sense according to the Latin, inasmuch as the concluding dactyl and spondee can be adequately represented. For the Greek accent, not depending on the quantity of the penultimate, but rather of the ultimate, will not present

the analogies of the dactyl and trochee, and also frequently falls on the last syllable. How shockingly we violate its rules may be seen from the opening of the Iliad, in which we read perforce, αἶδε οὐλόμενην, ἔθήκε, κυνέσσι, ἱρίσαντε, βούλῃ, Ἀχίλλευς, for, αἶδε, οὐλομένην, ἔθηκε, κύνεσσι, ἱρίσαντε, βουλή, Ἀχιλλεύς. Thus, in strictness, all Greek poetry is to us mere prose; and it is melancholy to think that it is impossible for us upon any basis either of accent or quantity, and there remains no other, to express the slightest analogy to what we know must have been the harmony of the Homeric hexameter.

## CHAPTER XV.

## ON THE ACCENTUATED HEXAMETER.

100. IT is a strong proof of the exceedingly deep harmony which the Latin hexameter must in its best days have supplied to its hearers, that its arrangement, even according to accent, is subject to certain laws; and therefore supplies a base of harmony. This is owing to the fortunate position of the accent, which depending on the length of the penultimate, has a marked relation to the constituent feet, by making every word terminate in an accentuated dactyl or rochee. And without this peculiarity of the Latin, it would have been impossible for us to perceive any harmony whatever in the measure. The jingle arising from substituting stress for the long syllable in the first place of each foot would have been all. What these laws are we will proceed to discover.

101. Both for shortness and clearness, let us represent the first syllable of the foot by  $a$ , the



second and third by *b*, so that *ab* shall be a spondee, *abb* a dactyl, and let the accentuated syllables be expressed by the usual marks *áb*, *ább*. Now lay down a line of six feet thus constructed,

ab' ab' ab' ab' ább áb,

the four first of which admit of resolution, as in,

ab'b ab'b ab'b ab'b ább áb.

But on account of the fourth *ab'* having its accent closely followed by the accent in *ább*, it so rarely occurs (as in Georg. ii. 385,

Néanon Ausónii Troja géns míssa colóni,

where, however, we rather slur over the accent on *géns*) that in general only its resolved form is used, viz. *ab'b*, or it is left without accent altogether, simple or resolved, as in,

ab' ab' ab' ab' ább áb  
ab'b ab'b ab'b ab'b ább áb.

An unaccentuated foot may indeed take place in any other part of the line, but then it should throw an accent forward on the following *a*, as in

ab' ab' ab' áb ább áb,

or,

ab' ab' ább' ab' ább áb;

where *abb'* arises from resolution of *b'* into *bb'*, and not *b'b*, in order to avoid the concurrence of accents in *ab'*, *abb'*. We shall now have a general scheme of the accentuated arrangement of the hexameter. For example,

ab' ab' ab' ab ább áb,  
ab' ab' ab áb ább áb,

represent the lines,

*Altérnis ídem tónsas cessáre nováles*  
*Extíntum nýmphæ crudéli fúnere Dáphnin,*

and

ab'b ab ább' ab ább áb  
ab'b ab'b ab' ab ább áb,

the lines,

*Accípíant, coelíque vías et sídera mónstrent.*  
*Nec vários ínhíant púlcrá testúdine póstes.*

102. But as in our heroic we admit an accent on the first instead of the second syllable of the line, so this hexameter often opens with *áb* instead of *ab'*, or *ább* in the place of *ab'b*. Thus,

áb ab'b ab' ab ább áb  
ább ab'b ab' ab ább áb,

represent

*Félix qui pótuit rérum cognóscere cáusas.*  
*Frígídis obstíterit círca præcórdia sánguís.*

The compound of *áb* and *ab'*, namely, *ább'*, as in *fudit équum* occurs in the first place, and may be found in the second and third; where, however, as the resolution of *áb'* it most commonly follows two unaccented syllables, as when the preceding foot is *ab*, *abb*, or *ább*, as in *Fortunáte sénex, Romános ad témpia Déum, trémens prócumbit húmi, bos. Víctima sæpe túo*, where the trochaic pause is followed by a dissyllable. It more seldom follows *áb*, as in *Quárum sacra féro*, and never of course *ab'*.

This unaccented foot *ab*, arises either from the use of words of four syllables and upwards, as *fortunátus, Laomedónta*; or, as is much more frequently the case, from a pause, which is succeeded by a word which is more than a dissyllable, so that no accent shall be on the first syllable, and which if a trisyllable, has the accent on the penultimate. Hence the cause of its seeming to throw its accent forward is evident, as also why it appears so commonly in the fourth foot, and next to that in the third.

The following is a scale of the first four feet of the ten lines which commence with *Georgic ii. 470*:—

0	ab	ább'	ab	ább
1	ab'	ab'	ab'	ab
2	ab'b	ab'b	ab'b	ab
3	ább'	ab	ább'	ab
4	ab'b	ab'	ab'	ab
5	ab'	ab'	ab'	ab
6	áb	ább'	ab'	ab
7	ab'b	ab	ább'	ab
8	ab'	ab'	ab'b	ab
9	ább'	ab'	ab	ább

Thus the common number of accents in the four first feet is three. We have indeed but two in

*Ambubaiárum Collégia Pharmacopólex,*

and full six in

*Híc méret aéra líber Sósils. Híc et mare transit ;*

if we press them all, which indeed according to stress we do not. Such are the extremes.

In reciting thus, we have a very distinct and pleasing perception of the pauses, and derive no small part of the music of the verse from them.

The hexameter, therefore, contains a regularly harmonious system even in the disposition of its accents. This music must have been equally perceptible with that of the quantity, to the Roman ear, and it gradually supplanted it ; losing however, at the same time, its own vigour, and

degenerating into our modern stress. Within about three centuries after the publication of the "Georgics," Commodian could send forth such hexameters as this:—

*In tálibus spés est véstra de Chrísto refécto,*

which agrees exactly in accent with number four in the above scale.

103. But since accent marks but one syllable, it can supply of itself no rule for dividing the feet so determinately as does quantity. For example, the lines,

*Indesinéntes víros labóres fatígant,  
Indesinentes viros dúros labores fatígant,  
Indesinentes viros prædúros labores fatígant,  
Indesinentes viros moritúros labores fatígant,*

are all equally correct accentuated hexameters, although they increase in the number of syllables until the last exceeds by four. How then are we to know when to take two syllables to a foot, and when three?

The rule can be gained from practice only. Since the last five syllables are distinctly marked off, the first four must contain at the least eight syllables, when the feet must be all spondees; at the most twelve syllables, when they must be all dactyls; and, as the mean between the two prevails, the

ear soon comes to divide the line into two dactyls and two spondees, and hence also to be accustomed to the other divisions. Thus the rule of the accent shortly becomes a sufficient guide, so that a person unacquainted with quantity shall enjoy the music of the accentuation of the metrical hexameter, and shall be able to construct accordingly.

104. But in fact our recitation by stress is still more regular than if we went upon accent only ; for now we can supply it to syllables which need it, and can omit it, or at least wink at it, where we want it not. Thus we put five stresses into the line,

*Ámbubaiárum Collégia Phármacopólae,*

and can be content with five in

*Hic meret æra liber Sósais. Hic ét mare tránsit.*

Such a basis is vague indeed ; still it is sufficiently firm to support such a body of harmony as we cannot draw forth from any of our modern measures. Hence many have endeavoured to introduce the hexameter among them ; with what success we are now enabled to ascertain, and will proceed to show.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## ON THE MODERN HEXAMETER.

105. It is somewhat satisfactory to be assured by the example of Comodian, that in our present mode of reciting the ancient hexameter we are not imposing upon it a system borrowed from our modern tongues, but only continuing one which has come down to us from the Latin, and into which the prosody of that tongue had degenerated even before the language itself had melted down into the modern tongues of Europe. In the higher walks of literature, indeed, the corruption was long resisted. And yet the structure of the verse of Claudian induces a suspicion that he wrote Latin verse much as we write it, according to the ears of Virgil and Ovid, rather than his own. In the lower walks, it may be doubted if quantity ever had over Latin verse that strict dominion which it exercised over Greek.

106. It is obvious that for its proper construction upon the basis of stress, the hexameter

requires a language which has few monosyllables, and gives some length to its words ; namely, three syllables to each on an average, as in the Latin. Otherwise, not only will the pauses be put into confusion by the minute division of the line, but it will be impossible to regulate the stress with marks sufficiently definite, since so many syllables will bear it. Thus, at the very outset, the attempt seems hopeless with us. We may as well endeavour to build the architrave of a Grecian portico with the flints which are used in the architecture of the Norfolk and Suffolk churches ; for we are quite unsupplied with a store of words of sufficient span. And, indeed, in any modern tongue, the necessary introduction of articles and prepositions, and auxiliary verbs, a large class of generally monosyllabic words, is fatal to the undertaking. The nature of the attempt in our language will be best seen by the following specimen, which is the opening of the "Georgics," rendered foot for foot and pause for pause, with as much attention to sense as the extreme difficulty of the case would allow.

What generates wheaten plenitude. What sideral season  
Ordereth, Macenas, ploughers : accommodates vinetrees  
For marrying : what tendeth oxen, for shepherds awaketh  
Care pastoral, apiaries what instrumentality serveth,  
These verses enunciate : O ye allglorious beacons,  
Glidingly directing onwards heaven's annual circuit,



Bacchus and fostering Ceres, under whose influence holy  
 Chaonian acorns vanish'd, wheatharvests arising,  
 Generous winegoblets Acheloian beverage temper'd.

The reader will readily see what a large demand a very few verses\* of this kind must make upon the Latin part of our tongue, and to what rudely spliced compounds of the native English it must drive us. Elms, vines, bees, sheep, stars, year, wheat, cannot find a place where they are most wanted. The hexameter in English proves to be a sort of foreign court in a country, excluding all the natives.

107. Since, however, some think that they may consider it as one of the measures of our language, we will give it some further consideration.

We have seen that its basis is essentially iambic. And since in its more regular form it lays five stresses, it turns out to be with us neither more nor less than a resolution of our English heroic line, such as,

Despáiring máids laménted lóvely Dáphnis :

resolve the third foot, as our dramatic poetry freely allows after the pause there (69), and put the necessary dactyl in the fifth, and we have,

Despáiring máidens laménted béautiful Dáphnis ;

exactly equivalent to

*Extinctum nýmphæ crudéli fúnere Dáphnin.*

Take another form, with six places of stress,

*Fáir hónour né'er surrenders, e'ér endúreth,*

and we have, by resolution after the stress,

*Fáirest hónour néver surrenders, éver endúreth,*

which is the same as

*Dígnus hónos, squálent abdúctis árva colónis.*

By adding unaccented syllables at the stresses,  
we may resolve the line further, as

*Ináimate, périshing, irrecláimable, beautiful Dáphnis,  
Fáirest hónour deprecáteth surrendèring, éver endúreth.*

And thus we may arrive at a line of the same number of feet, but of much more length, as we did in the case of the accentuated hexameter; a proof again of the vagueness of this measure when based upon accent or stress. But there can be no doubt that it is this secret analogy with our heroic which principally recommends the hexameter to our ear.

108. But so difficult is its execution on this plan, owing to our deluge of monosyllables, that our writers have had recourse to that which of all things they most carefully avoid in reciting it

in its native languages. They proceed by way of scanning, laying the stress continually on the place of the long syllable. This is not only utterly intolerable in movement, being like the trot or canter of a miserably lame horse ; but utterly destroys also all perception of the pauses, which on the foregoing plan are exhibited in such fullness and variety. The pause in the middle of the third foot, which is in itself so majestic, very often falls on a monosyllable, and thus becomes a dead halt, after which the line limps somewhat further again. Indeed, we seem to be playing at the child's game, and hop to this pause, then skip to the dactyl in the fifth, and thence jump to the end. And it perpetually recurs so strongly marked as to be unrelieved by any other of sufficient strength. A line may be drawn through its place, from the top to the bottom of the page, as thus,

Painted with brilliant dyes	and adorned with tassels of crimson,
Nodded in bright array,	like hollyhocks heavy with blossom ;
Patiently stood the cows	meanwhile, and yielded their udders
Into the milkmaid's hand	whilst loud and in regular cadence
Into the sounding pail	the foaming streamlets descended

What would the classical admirers of such lines as these say to the following, which are constructed with the same feet and pauses, but with much more difficulty in Latin than that former

translation from the "Georgics" was in English. Sense is out of the question here.

Stabat at illic bos	nec erat jam seevus in agro.
Vacca per hoc tectum	fert ubera tenta nec errat.
Pocula sunt in hac	querit quæ Davus et haurit
Lucet et undis lac	mox sunt et in sedibus amnes
Alba per omnes jam	sunt dextras sparsa fluenta.

Surely never did pedantry go beyond this, and little compliment indeed is paid to our tongue, which is thought to be so worthily adorned by the very vilest offcasts of the Latin. Still, the measure may be employed in this latter shape, provided it be constructed of dactyls only, and broken into a lyrical measure by dividing it into two lines, at either the syllabic or trochaic pause in the third foot. What was too jingling for the soberness of narrative may be most suitable of all to the levity of song. Here is an example :

Down a re-echoing mountain,  
 In prattlesome pace to the ocean,  
 Hurried a silvery fountain,  
 Impatient to pay his devotion.  
 Haplessly glorying, fool !  
 For a Tanner his journey resisted ;  
 Pent him a day in his pool,  
 And then loos'd him to go where he listed.  
 Spoil'd of the sheen of his flood  
 Yet he still on his way would determine,  
 Rumbling and tumbling with mud,  
 And with dogs, and with cats, and with vermin.

Thus to the palace he ventur'd  
Of Neptune his king with a stream full ;  
Tritons loud laugh'd as he enter'd,  
The nymphs cried shocking and shameful.  
Neptune, reclining at dinner,  
Uprose, and exclaimed in a fury,  
" Down into Styx with the sinner,  
And wait not for judge or for jury."

How little attention is paid to the vehicle of our songs when such a lively measure is hardly (if ever) employed, and the commonplace iambic adopted in preference.

109. The measure, however, itself is essentially lyrical, even in its native languages. In them it originally furnished the metre to national stories, such as our own forefathers expressed under the form of the ballad, and all countries have related in a lyrical strain. With the ancients, in fact, the epic was only a department of the lyric, being sung, and was proper to a formal and continued narrative ; while mere sketches of narrative, such as we have in Pindar, were better expressed in that stanzaic form, which we now reckon peculiarly lyrical. Only let any one compare a portion of Homer with the narrative of a tragic messenger, and then its lyrical essence will immediately be manifest. Hence the evidently untranslatable nature of this species of ancient poetry, which nevertheless has been

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commonly reckoned capable of being rendered by a suitable equivalent; while the difficulty has seemed to be confined to the expression of that species of it which is strictly lyrical. But let the reader go fresh and full with the sense of the ancient language, and he will find the descent from the hexameter of Homer and Virgil to the heroic rhymed, or unrhymed, of the translations of Pope, Dryden, and Cowper, to be deep indeed.

As far as the rhymed couplet is concerned, this difference may be illustrated by that which lies between a large and well-proportioned man with his head covered, but with clustering locks of natural hair, and a thin, short, weakly framed man, with a great cap and feathers on his head. How mean and vulgar seems the latter in comparison! As to the unrhymed line, it has all the weakness without the pretension to ornament. No wonder therefore that the unfitness of heroic line for serious narrative was very early discovered, and gave birth to its stanzaic arrangement, which restored the lyrical cast; and thus in great measure was recovered the ancient force of narrative; although the uniformity introduced by the stanza has proved no slight obstacle in the way of its animated and continuous stream. To the consideration of this form of epic poetry we will now proceed.

## CHAPTER XVII

## ON STANZAIC POETRY.

110 THE heroic couplet, though largely employed in narrative by early modern writers, as, for example, by Chaucer in a great portion of his "Canterbury Tales," was nevertheless found unfit to convey the tone of the epic. When they turned their attention to the introduction of that species of poetry into their native tongues, their ears were full of the majestic sound and wonderful variety of the Virgilian hexameter: and it was not until their experiment had succeeded so far as to obtain greater variety of harmony and fulness of swell, but had also failed in attaining the requisite flexibility and animation by the introduction of much straitness and monotony on the large scale, through the continued repetition of the stanza, that Milton broke through the established rule, and ventured on the novel experiment of blank verse, which had indeed been employed some time ago in Italy to the service

of didactic poetry, and had long been the tragic metre among his own countrymen. In his particular case the choice seems to have been judicious, for if we may infer from his sonnets and lyrical pieces, his genius did not suit the stanza. In all of them his sweetness is uncertain and mingled with harshness: and it must be allowed that, although his scenes laid in Paradise may have been described with greater luxuriance and richness by means of the stanza, yet such passages as that containing the fall of the angels, in the opening of his work, would have come short of their simple and terrible grandeur, and suffered from such a vehicle of narrative.

But, as before observed, the descent is felt to be deep indeed from Homer and Virgil to Milton, as far as the ear is concerned with the harmony of versification, to say nothing of the great inferiority of the music of his national language. The difference would not be greater, if, after having accompanied a splendid procession which moved to band and flags, we joined a quiet stream of people in the streets who were on the way to some public but ordinary meeting. But the couplet having been discarded by his predecessors, and their stanza by himself, there remained but blank verse. Thus he was freed from the monotony with which the rhymed couplet cloyes the ear in a long and



serious narrative, and from those rules regarding its closing pauses which so seriously impede that freeness of flow and suddenness of turn which is requisite to animated narrative. He relieved his verse also from that triviality so injurious to majestic expression of thought, which the frequency of so marked a recurrence produces. But, on the other hand, his line lost a source of harmony with which it could ill dispense. It came lower down towards the tone of common conversation, instead of rising higher up above it, in proportion as the epic is above the dramatic. Indeed nothing shows so much its poverty and exceeding inferiority to the two corresponding ancient measures than the fact previously pointed out, that while Homer and Sophocles lose very much when translated ever so well into the language and measure of Milton and Shakespeare; yet Milton and Shakespeare gain exceedingly when cleverly and tastefully translated into the language and measure of Homer and Sophocles.

111. The stanza introduces an additional source of harmony, at the same time that it obviates the cloying effect of rhyme. This latter, being now immediate, now alternate, now at a greater distance still, now double, now treble, or quadruple, loses much of its monotony; and an additional occasion of return, so much needed in our verse, is

obtained by the various modes of its distribution : and this again, requiring certain stops and pauses in order to enounce it properly, opens thus a further occasion of return.

112. If we mean by a stanza a certain number of lines which are so arranged and bound together as always to recur in the same sequence, we shall have a definition which will embrace the stanzas of ancient and modern lyric poetry, and include the combination of pentameter and hexameter, as well as our heroic couplet. But for the purposes of epic and didactic poetry, it were better to define it to be a recurring sequence of three or more heroic lines, which are interlaced by their rhymes, the close of the sequence being marked by the last rhyme which has reference to any preceding. As the stanzas increase in size they display divisions, which harmony requires to be marked, and therefore to be closed with stops of more or less distinctness, the necessity growing with the distinctness of division, which again grows with the size and consequent complexity of the stanza. Thus the Spenserian stanza is not perfect without stops denoting the termination of the quatrain, the tercet, and the couplet which should compose it. But Spenser seldom observes such strictness of rule, and often composes his stanza as if it contained two quatrains closed by an Alexandrine.

These divisions also should grow less as the stanza proceeds ; for example, the quatrain should be followed, not preceded, by the tercet. Thus the sense is wound up and concentrated towards the close. Whereas a gradual enlargement of the divisions would give a diffused and languid expansion of thought. The Spenserian stanza, considered as consisting of the three parts above-mentioned, is a beautiful example of this graceful tapering, as it were, of the verse and sense to a point. It forms a solid shapely pyramid.

113. Not having yet considered the couplet, we may here remark, that according to natural and regular construction, the first line should end with a pause in the sense, in accommodation to the distinct mark of the rhyme ; and the sense should close with the second, in order to maintain the distinctness of sequence. But since this strictness would very much limit its use, it is often, and perhaps too often, dispensed with. Of course it is most maintained in didactic, least in narrative poetry. But such as write couplets with all the freedom of blank verse, evidently gain all the faults and lose all the advantages of either system.

114. The tercet cannot form a stanza in itself, unless the three lines which compose it have but one rhyme, which would be intolerable, or one

line be left unrhymed, which is contrary to the nature of a stanza. Dante, however, in his *terza rima*, has managed to connect tercets, by giving a common rhyme in any two following to those lines which in themselves would have been, as above mentioned, unrhymed. Thus suppose A, B, C, D, &c., to be consecutive rhymes: then his tercets follow in the order A B A, B C B, C D C, D E D, &c., so that there is a continued link of rhyme from one end of the poem to the other, the beginning of every tercet carrying on the rhyme of the middle of the preceding. These tercets are all very accurately distinguished by the stop, as in the following translation:—

If hearing this, no horror o'er thee creep,  
If guessing what I now began to dread,  
Thou weep'st not, wherefore art thou wont to weep?  
Now were they all awake. The hour when bread  
Was wont to be bestow'd had now drawn near,  
And dismal doubts in each his dream had bred.

The tercet thus formed in dependence supplies a means of narrative remarkably expressive of the peculiar spirit and genius of Dante, and suitable to the monotonous solemnity of his subject: but on this very account he has never been followed in it by epic writers.

115. The next form is the quatrain, consisting of four lines. This admits of two forms, A B A B,

A B B A ; of these, the latter is evidently unfit for use independently, since we cannot employ a stop which does not contradict the response of the rhyme. After A B, it will separate too much the rhymes B and B: and moreover, within so confined a space, the extreme rhymes are in too great contrast, by their remoteness, with the two which are close together. It may, however, be used dependently, as the tercet by Dante ; for since we expect another rhyme B further on, we are not offended at the pause after the first B, which has now no longer the same close relation to the second B. The almost universal form, therefore, when it stands independent, is the former. It is extensively used, being exceedingly well adapted by its monotonous flow to elegiac poetry, its small compass affording little internal variety, and at the same time causing externally its more frequent recurrence. Davenant showed, therefore, little judgment in applying it to epic poetry in his "Gondibert." Dryden was more happy in his choice of it for his "Annus Mirabilis," a poem partly elegiac, partly approaching to epic. The following is a noble stanza.

His generous mind the fair ideas drew  
Of fame and honour, which in dangers lay ;  
Where wealth like fruit on precipices grew,  
Not to be gather'd but by birds of prey.

116. The stanza of five lines scarcely occurs. Its construction admits of no balance. Three lines of one rhyme against two of another in so small a compass, is too great a preponderance, and we feel sensibly the want of a third line to restore the equilibrium. Chaucer gives us an example, the form of which is certainly the best, AABBA, in his "Cuckoo and Nightingale," here is a stanza :—

For thereof cometh disease and heaviness,  
So sorrow and care, and many a great sickness,  
Despite, debate, anger, and envy,  
Depraving, shame, untrust, and jealousy,  
Pride, mischief, poverty, and moodiness.

117. The stanza of six lines is the first which presents a decided composite structure, being made up of a quatrain and couplet, or of two tercets, as ABA BCC, or ABCABC; or of six lines, responding alternately to two rhymes, as ABABAB. This is decidedly one of its worst forms. Yet it is employed by Drayton, in his "Musophilus." Lord Brooke wrote his "Treatise on Monarchy," in the first form. It opens thus :—

There was a time, before the times of story,  
When Nature reign'd, instead of laws and arts,  
And mortal gods with men made up the glory  
Of one republic by united hearts.  
Earth was the common seat, their conversation  
In saving love, and ours in adoration.

The best that can be said for it is, that it suited the genius of the writer.

118. The seven-lined stanza is not quite long enough to be free from the difficulties which arise out of the odd number of lines. It naturally presents the structure of the quatrain followed by the tercet, which admits of the arrangement ABB AABA, or ABBACBC, and also of what is the very worst of all, ABABCCC, which the two Fletchers have so unhappily employed, and as might have been expected, without followers. Thus Phineas opens his "Purple Island :—"

The warmer sun the golden bull outran,  
And with the twins made haste to inn and play :  
Scattering ten thousand flowers, he now began  
To paint the world and pierce the lengthening day ;  
The world more aged by new youth's accruing.  
Ah, wretched man ! this wicked world pursuing,  
Which still grows worse by age, and older by renewing.

We here first meet with the terminating Alexandrine, which gives a full close to the stanza, and divides it very decidedly from its fellows. It evidently could not have appeared well in a shorter stanza. Its force would there be disproportionate.

Chaucer, and after him Gascoigne, has employed the form ABABBCC, which presents a very defective division indeed. The following is from the "Man of Law's Tale :—"

Now woulde[n] some men waiten, as I guess,  
 That I should tellen all the purveyance  
 That the Emperor of his nobless  
 Hath shapen for his daughter, Dame Custance :  
 Well may men know that so great ordinance  
 May no man tellen in a little clause,  
 As was arrayed for so high a cause.

119. But of all others of any length the eight-lined stanza has been most employed, and in the most celebrated works. It admits of a vast variety of forms, according as writers have regarded its composition. It may be considered as made up of two quatrains, and thus the Troubadours exhibit the forms ABBACDDC, which is exceedingly defective from the independence of such quatrains. Much better is Chaucer's linking of the quatrains in the form ABABBCBC. It has also been considered as consisting of a quatrain and two couplets, a most defective arrangement again, of which the Troubadours exhibit the form ABBACCDD. But others have divided it into six lines or two tercets, responding alternately to two rhymes, followed by a couplet containing a third, and therefore exhibiting the form ABABABCC. Thus composed, it is the celebrated ottava rima of the epic poetry of Italy. Whether this be the most harmonious form may well be doubted. There is a languid monotony or drawl in the alternating six lines, to



which the force of the brevity of the couplet seems to give a shock. Perhaps, however, for the long run of a narrative poem, it was on the whole the best. Yet the division ABA | ABA | | CC, seems better than the favourite AB | AB | AB | CC. And it was most probably the original division, since the measure may have been adopted as a modification of Dante's, the continuousness of which seemed to want a break: and, therefore, they interposed the couplet at the end of every couple of tercets, which gave the poet the further advantage of a good opportunity for changing his rhyme. The following example is the second stanza of Fairfax's translation of Tasso's poem.

O, heavenly Muse, that not with fading bays  
 Deckest thy brow by the Heliconian spring,  
 But sittest crown'd with stars' immortal rays  
 In heaven, where legions of bright angels sing:  
 Inspire life in my wit, my thoughts upraise,  
 My verse ennoble, and forgive the thing,  
 If fictions light I mix with truths divine,  
 And fill these lines with other praise than thine.

120. The nine-lined stanza is comparatively little used. It is remarkable as including the form adopted, and seemingly invented, by Spenser, which is ABABBCBCC. Remarks on its very graceful construction, as tapering to a point through the succession of the quatrain, tercet, and

couplet, have been made already. Here is an example, from Book i. Cant. ii. 2.

When those accursed messengers of hell  
That feigning dream, and that fair-fayed spright  
Came to their wicked maister, and gan tell  
Their bootless pains, and ill-succeeding night :  
Who, all in rage to see his skilful might  
Deluded so, gan threaten bellish pain  
And sad Proserpine's wroth them to affright.  
But when he saw his threatening was but vain,  
He cast about, and searcht his baleful books again.

This regular construction, however, is far from common with Spenser. In general, he is very indifferent to any regular division of his stanza by the pauses. He will sometimes put the tercet first, as in B. v. c. 9, 31, sometimes the couplet. Here, like all our English writers, he is in strong contrast to the Italians, who are very attentive to these matters.

This stanza, when more regularly divided, gives out a fine swell of harmony, closing it most magnificently with the lengthened sound of the Alexandrine, which comes too with peculiar effect, as a kind of redundance and upspring from the second quatrain, when the stanza is so divided. But it may be well doubted whether it be not too full and rich, and unwieldy, and independent for narrative, and do not much aggravate all the defects of stanzaic poetry as to animation and

flexibility. Each stanza is a splendid stage-waggon, drawn by nine as splendid dray-horses, and proceeds at a solemn majestic pace. But a short turn would put all into confusion. Very different this from Homer's two-wheeled car and two horses, with "necks with thunder clothed." Thus it is more lyric than epic, and approaches to the nature of the sonnet. And as the measure chosen by an author reacts upon him, so Spenser's measure seems to have led him into that long detail of description to which it is so suitable, and thus added to his previous inclination to indulge in such exuberance. As it is, however, it requires vigorous and skilful handling, such as few but Spenser could afford, and more than he was always disposed to give. It may be reckoned peculiar to the "Faery Queen," as is the terza rima to the "Divina Comedia," having been as little employed by his fellow-countrymen as the Italian's was by his. Until very lately, scarcely any thing but parodies had been written in it.

121. We seem now to have reached the full magnitude of the stanza as applied to narrative. Henceforward it becomes far too unwieldy, and decidedly lyrical. There do indeed occur stanzas of ten lines in the poems of the Troubadours. The two forms ABBACDCDDC, ABBACDDCEE may serve for examples. Both are very defective

on account of the independence of such quatrains.

122. In order to complete the catalogue, the sonnet must be mentioned. It consists of fourteen lines, arranged in two quatrains followed by two tercets, and enouncing, when strictest, four rhymes, being of the form ABBAABBACDCCDC, the tercet admitting also of the form CDCDCD. This is a remarkably harmonious measure. Somewhat less so, but still very pleasing is the form ABBAABBACDECDE, of which the tercets admit of the variety CDEDCE. The pauses fall regularly at the end of each quatrain and tercet. Such is the pure Italian model, in which every provision is made for good harmony. But with their usual disregard for the resources of harmony, which being so scanty in their own tongue are naturally much overlooked, English writers have commonly thrown the sonnet into utter confusion. They not only utterly neglect the pauses, and thus derange its careful and beautiful construction, but more frequently than otherwise make the second rhyme in the quatrains distinct, so that the form ABBAACCADE-FDEF is as strict a form as is commonly adopted. But the independence of two such quatrains, is, as we have seen before, far from agreeing with the true principles of harmony (119). But much

laxer forms are more prevalent. The two quatrains are often quite independent in rhyme, and for the tercets is substituted another quatrain closed by a couplet. Sometimes these three quatrains are made up of alternate rhymes, and thus nothing remains of the sonnet but the number of the lines. Such licences are utterly unwarranted by difficulty of execution. Our language is quite equal to this, though so inferior in resources of rhyme to the Italian. We need not wonder that the measure, rendered thus unmeaning, is not popular among us.

123. The stanza restored epic poetry to its original character of a song, of which fact we have, or rather had, a remarkable example in the singing of the stanzas of the "Jerusalem Delivered," by the Venetian boatmen. But at the same time large demands are made upon the skill of the poet to adapt such a measure to the rapidity and abruptness of epic narrative. Let any one take up the "Iliad" or "Æneid," after the "Jerusalem," and "Faery Queen," and he will see on what hard conditions of staid movement, which will neither quicken nor slacken its pace on any account, the majesty of stanzaic epic has been obtained. The hexameter is like the old legionary, a completely armed and well-practised soldier, who can march or run, advance or retire, face and turn about in an instant,

according as occasion calls ; and is compact and sufficient in himself for every turn of service. But the stanza is like a body of those foreign soldiers which the old Romans despised, and who, being individually ill-armed and ill-disciplined, find all their safety depend in keeping close together, and obeying nothing but one general movement : so that quick evolutions, rapid advance, sudden stop, are out of the question : all must be done by rule, with slow solemnity. And let the work to be done be that of one, or five, or ten men, the whole ten must do it. Again, the internal integrity of the stanza often requires an idea to be expanded through its whole extent, which ought to occupy little more than a half or two-thirds of it. And the overflow of a full stanza will often have to be expanded most thinly throughout the next. Hence heavy, unwieldy, and often weak prolixity, is the besetting fault against which its constructor has to be on the perpetual watch ; and which the reader, if he grow fastidious, as through such monotony he naturally does, is very quick at detecting. Homer, with fifty of his impetuous and concentrated hexameters, sometimes does as effectual work as Tasso with fifty of his stanzas. Such is the high price paid for superior harmony. But music is proverbially expensive.

## CHAPTER XVIII

## ON LYRIC POETRY.

124. THE tune to which the hexameter was sung, though accompanied by the lyre, as we see in the example of Demodocus in the "Odyssey," must have been a plain and invariable chant. But instrumental music is too ambitious to be long confined to so narrow limits. In process of time it accomplished an air, and thenceforward became more a master than a servant to poetry. Verses were to be adapted to the turns of this varied tune. Hence, instead of the old uniformity, their lengths were different, and even their measure varied: and as the air can be of but limited length, it was repeated again and again; hence, also, the verses were repeated again and again in the same order of length and measure. Thus originated the stanza. Not, however, that the stanza is universally employed in ancient lyric poetry: there are gradations, of course, from the repetition of one line, as in the first Ode of

Horace ; through couplets, as in his Ode ii. 18, and in his Epodes ; through quatrains, as the Alcaic and Sapphic measures, up to the diversified turns and solemn length of the Greek strophe.

Nor is the stanza indispensable to modern lyric poetry. The "Allegro" and "Penseroso" of Milton have been set to expressive music. But, as in the ancient, it is the common form, if the piece be really lyrical, that is, intended to be sung as a song, and not adapted to the artificial strains of the opera or oratorio. From the odes of Collins and Gray, to the songs of Glover and Gay, there is no piece which is not thus divided. The common form is naturally the quatrain, lying, as it does, about the middle between the simple line and the more complex forms. The extreme in the direction of these latter is more difficult to determine. It may contain about twelve or sixteen lines, if we take the Odes of Pindar and the dramatic choruses for examples. The more elaborate the music, so much the more easily would the ear, thus assisted, follow a long and diversified series of lines : but in proportion to its simplicity, the ear is thrown upon the naked relations of the lines among themselves, and for very clearness desires a shorter number of them. Our Pindaric odes are constructed upon an utter misapprehension of this principle : they have all



the intricacy of the Pindaric construction, without the slightest reference in the mind of the composer to the guidance of a musical accompaniment. Thus, in Gray's "Installation Ode," the rhymes are so distant as to determine nothing, especially in the two last stanzas. Seven lines occur between the rhymes *hand* and *band*. It was indeed written for music; but did he expect the music to last, and go every where together with it? And yet it is one of the most regular of our Pindarics. Can we wonder at their unpopularity? Perhaps in no case has pedantry shown its perverseness more manifestly.

125. Since every line is now a characteristic feature of the stanza, having to manifest a pointed similarity to its fellows in it, as in the case of the Sapphic, or a pointed difference, as in the main case of the Alcaic, it is plain that the substitution of equivalent feet must be abandoned, or at least very much curtailed in its extent of licence. What, for instance, would become of the Alcaic, if spondees were substituted for its dactyls? It can only occur where the peculiarity of the measure of the line does not lie in the very syllables of the foot, as it does in the case of the Sapphic, but simply in the whole foot, as it does in so many cases of the choral metres.

126. Rich indeed was ancient poetry in its

variety of lyrical measure. Coming from the enjoyment of it to the corresponding class of our modern poetry, we are struck with its exceeding poverty, and this poverty is the more provoking because it might in no small measure have been avoided; for our language is by no means incompetent to furnish us with trochaic, dactylic, anapæstic, and even other lively measures, peculiarly fitted to song. And yet with the exception of a few songs, all our lyrical poetry, from ballad up to strophe, is iambic in measure. It consequently wants character and spirit. A hymn, an ode, a drinking song, a funeral song, a love song, are all written in this one measure, which, too, comes nearest to prose of all. And the Odes of Pindar, as well as of Horace, have been indiscriminately done into this universal and therefore utterly unmeaning form.

127. An evil genius seems to have presided over our lyric poetry. It was not enough, it seems, to make the measure unmeaning—something more was wanting still: so the measure itself is debased. Here, above all, the aid of rhyme was most necessary to distinguish the lines from each other, and add some variety besides. But led by the example of the ancients, and blind through pedantry to the very superior means which they had of marking the difference of their lines, Milton

in the choruses of his "Samson Agonistes," and Southey in some of his works, have thought to write blank lyric verse. They might well have spared their paper, and measured their lines by the breadth of the page ; for they owe their shape entirely to the printer's hand, and are verses but to the eye. Their arrangement, therefore, however the poet's manuscript might have directed that hand, can have no real effect upon the mind. They may be written in prose and printed in verse, and then read into prose again, or into quite a different and yet equally good arrangement of lines. If it be urged that the Greek choruses also admit of different arrangements, the answer is, that such difference is much more the fault of our ignorance than of their work.

Since, then, our lyrical lines commonly differ not in any thing but their number of feet, every stanza is essentially defective in its structure, which does not mark off every line by a rhyme. Hence that stanza, so common in our hymns and songs, which leaves the first and third lines rhymeless, is exceedingly objectionable, and especially in sacred poetry, which admits of nothing slovenly and inferior.

128. The very foundation, indeed, of lyrical poetry has never been properly laid amongst us. If our songs are so defective in principle, what

must be our odes, the composition, as they are of scholars, and so fitted to a reading, and not to a singing public? Can we wonder at the feats of the absurd Pindaric mania in the two last centuries, and that it has hardly left a wreck behind? In going to the ancients, they should have looked not only at the varied length of their lines, but at the varied measure of those lines, and sought to introduce that also to the ears of their countrymen. There appears no reason why we should not have admitted, for example, the dochmiac measure, such as,

Beyond cloud and star our hopes soaring mount,  
To drink deep of truth amid glory's fount.

And the variety and richness of measure which we may obtain, without the difficulty of unfamiliarity to the ear, from the dactylic and anapaestic metres, either pure or intermixed,—the former with trochees, the latter with iambuses,—seems to have been quite overlooked. The Germans have been more venturous, and have reaped good fruit.

129. Not that attempts have not been made to naturalize the classical lyric metres but they have miserably failed, as might have been expected, when the framers set out with a confusion of stress with quantity, and of recitation with scanning, as we have seen formerly.

130. It is possible, indeed, now and then to represent an ancient stanza according to the system of scanning by stress, as,

Arise, deject maid, wake thee, Jerusalem !  
 Arise, adjust thee chaplet and jewelry,  
 From dust and soiling ashes rouse thee :  
 Darkness and sorrow are fled for ever.

Or according to the system of recitation before mentioned (97),

Séest how stándeth snówlit and dráperied  
 Sorácte, nór now continuous fórests  
 Béar up their whélming lóad, and rivers  
 Tólerate imprísonment and sílence.

To which we will add, on account of Milton's strange misapprehension, the measure of Horace, Od. i. 5, 5,

Simple in elegance. How shall he deprecate  
 Pledges perjurious, deities alien,  
 All in wonder beholding  
 Black with tempest the océan.

But on either plan there is required an effort beyond the capability of our language, even for a single stanza. The German being homogeneous, and therefore fertile in inflection, will succeed much better; but, after all, the success is slight indeed. It is vain for a language which is ruled by stress to strive to accomplish the feats of one which is ruled by quantity. It is to be hoped

that we have at length seen the end of such pedantic and absurd ventures in English. The grand point which should have been ascertained is the limit of our language on this head. In ignorance of that, what we have has been overlooked and left to perish; what we have not has been imported and cultivated, and failed. It is now too late to mend the mistake. Our literature has long ago reached its maturity. The tune of our versification has been irreversibly established to the ear. And if familiarity breeds contempt, unfamiliarity begets indignant repulse: and therefore our truly lyric poetry must ever be almost a blank.

THE END.

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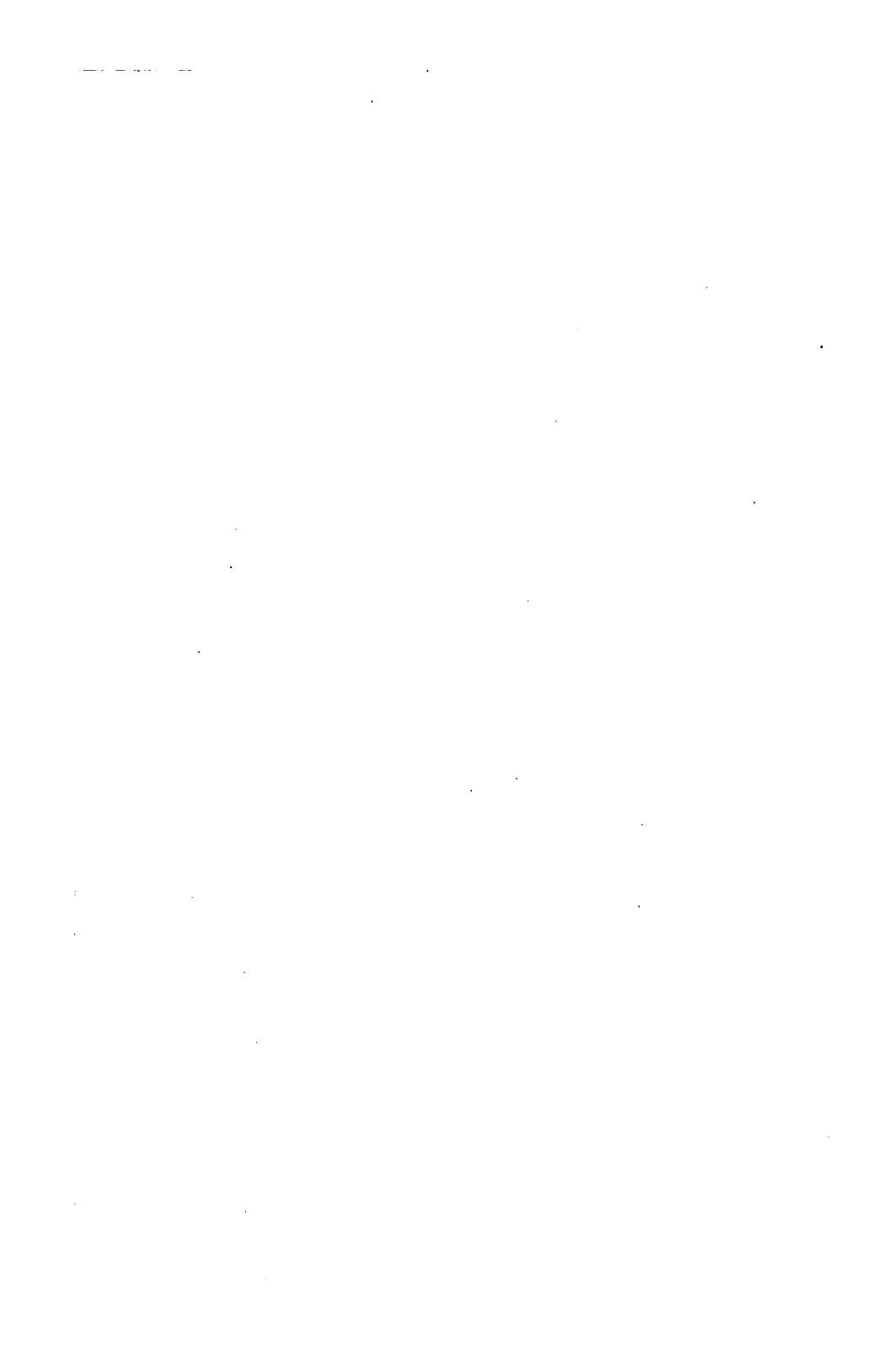
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